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Megacom

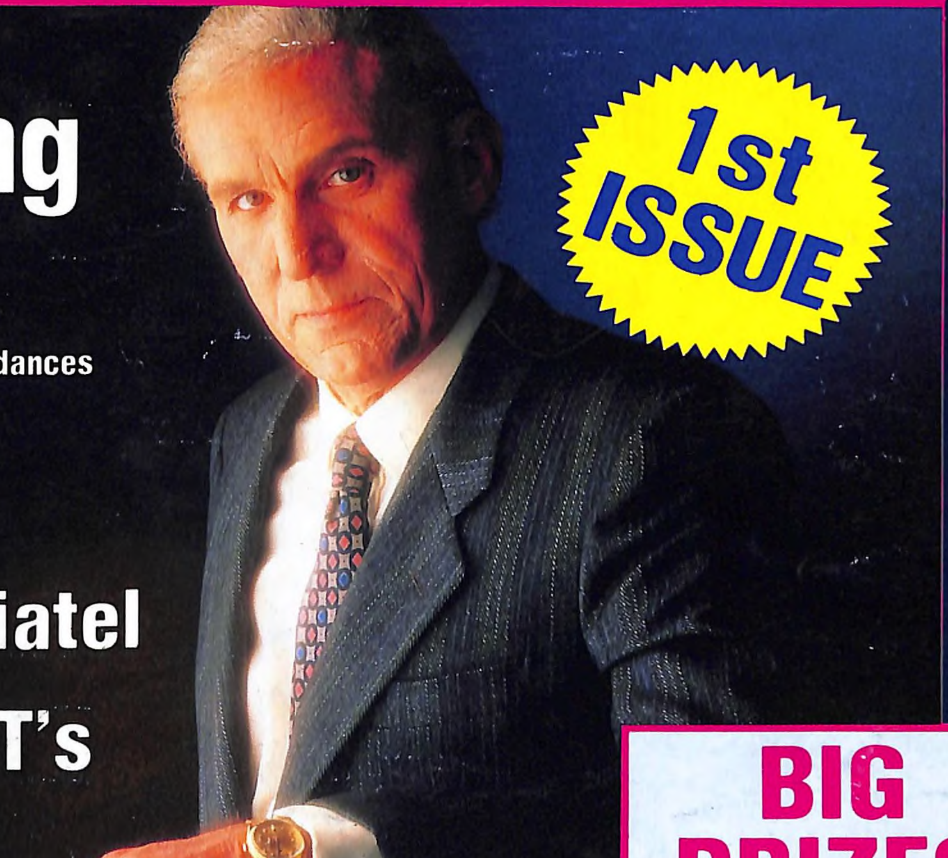
10

AUSTRALIA'S HOME COMPUTER MAGAZINE

1st ISSUE

Amazing Amiga!

It sings, it talks, it almost dances with its Sound Digitiser!



All about Viatel

Get your phone on screen!

The Atari ST's

Challengers for the crown!

Zlotnik 44

Russian revolution?

MSX in OZ

Faded star or not?

School's in

Computers in education

Amstrad

128K versatility

BIG PRIZES

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Welcome!

...to the first edition of MEGACOM - Australia's Home Computer Magazine!

MEGACOM is a different sort of Computer Magazine that has been planned to help you get the best and the most out of the world of home computers.

We're not into the usual magazine technical bafflegab. Rather, our aim is to entertain and inform you.

We'll be bringing you regular reviews of computers, printers, disk drives, modems, games and other programs.

As well, there will be news from User Groups, a Technical Advice Department, stories about computer communications, a nosey news section and many other features.

We're looking for feedback from you, too. Write and tell us what you like or don't like about MEGACOM. Been caught by a rip-off? Write to MEGACOM. Want some advice? Write to MEGACOM.

If you want to be sure of getting MEGACOM, remember that a subscription is the best way to do it. It's also a great gift idea. You'll save money by using the special subscription form on page 35.

Finally, my thanks to Ellen, Denis, Craig, Dave, Tino and the rest of the crew who helped plan and get MEGACOM underway over these past nine months. Special thanks go to our advertisers who had faith in the idea that became MEGACOM. And thanks to **you** for buying this copy.

That's it for now. We'll be looking for your letters. Here's your first MEGACOM....

Peter Lindemann

Peter Lindemann.
Publisher & Executive Editor

Issue Number 1
July/August 1988

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Publisher & Executive Editor:
Peter Lindemann

Design & Features Editor:
Denis Mercier

Technical Editor:
John Carter

Administration:
Ellen Dunleavy

Gopher:
Jerry Blick

●

Contributors to this issue:
Tadeus Brinski
Jeff Cullinan
Andrew Jamieson
Harmik Khoronian
S.T. Linter
Henry McGee
David Morrow
Craig Nicholls
Valentino Rossi
Roger Stockburger
Charles Tanaka
Dennis Whitton
Roland Yeung

●

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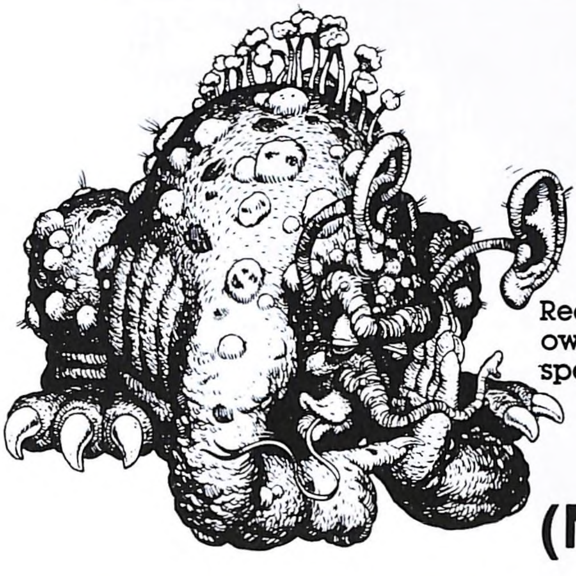
MEGACOM MAGAZINE IS DEDICATED TO MAXWELL GRAHAM LINDEMANN (1930-1987)
WHOSE INSPIRATION TURNED THE DREAM INTO REALITY. HIS MEMORY LIVES ON.

Number 1
July/August
1988



AMIGA VIRUS

Read what's giving Amiga owners a dose of the jitters. A special Megacom report.

6

(MEGANEWS)

C64 megapokes

Stuck with a game on your C64? Here's a handful of get-you-going hints.

21

PC your ST

IBM compatibility is only a hop, skip, and jump away for your Atari ST.

26

Jack's giant killers

They're the Atari ST's. Jack is Jack Tramiel. Read the inside story.

8

ARCADE

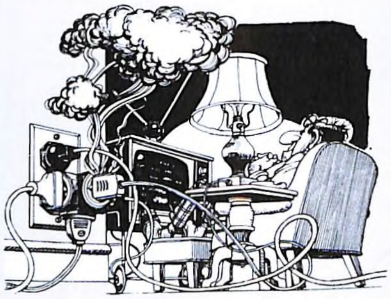
To play or not to play? Megacom's tireless reviewers check the latest games for you!

27

AMSTRAD

This stiff-upper-lip Brit is quite a surprise package. Read the facts!

36



Living dangerously with CoCo

Mr. Tandy - are you listening? This shouldn't happen to a dog, but it's hilarious, anyway.

23

VIATEL®

Telecom's bouncing baby is winning new converts every day. Is it for you? Here's the low-down in detail!

12

MEGA WORDS!

You could be a winner in our baffling new game! Prizes galore from Computer Oasis and Megacom. Entry's FREE!

24

Amiga's hidden messages

EXCLUSIVE! Megacom reveals how to find the hidden messages in your Amiga 1000!

22

ZLOTNIK 44

The Russians are coming! Then again, maybe they aren't. KGB raids Megacom offices....

43

LINK WORD

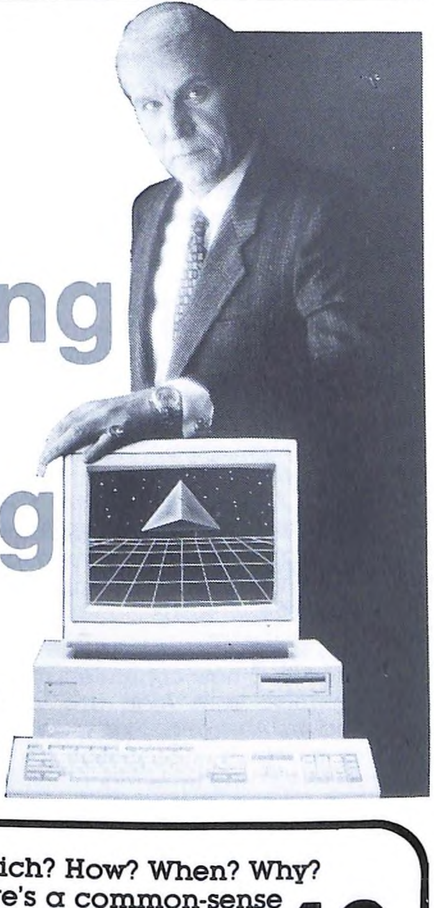
The put-it-in-your-pocket word processor for Sega computers. Lots for very little.

39

New Apple Printer

Alternative to costly Laser machines is a beauty. Check it out.

44



The singing dancing and talking Amiga!

The dancing bit's a lie, but the rest is true. Read about an incredible new piece of gear for your Amiga!

18

VIATEL HONOUR ROLL

Someone you know is sure to be here. All revealed on page 42

BLICK

Our resident whinger. Next thing he'll want to be paid. Arrrghh! 45

MARKETPLACE

The little ads. You never know what you'll find here. On page

USER GROUPS

Megacom's FREE section for user 46

Computers at school

Which? How? When? Why? Here's a common-sense guide for students, parents AND teachers.

40

NEXT MEGACOM

- The ones that bit the dust
- More Reviews
- The Empire Strikes Back

And heaps more!

MEGAN

Amiga Virus. Computerdom's versions of Trojan skinheads are wreaking havoc on Amigas throughout Australia. These nasties have been called viruses (there's also the Amiga Bug) because they get into your machine hidden in pirated or public domain software and then set about screwing things up. One is called the SCA, which damages disks - even some write-protected ones. Another (Byte Bandit) does its dirty work on your computer itself. Commodore have an official virus killer, but some other antidotes only make things worse. The moral is: steer clear of pirated, borrowed or sus PD software. Through a chain of contacts, Megacom tried to speak to the supposed Sydney creator of one of the viruses, but he/she/it got a sudden attack of the shirty frights. We're still trying.

IBM warning. Apparently Amiga isn't the only computer having virus trouble. A recent Bulletin Board message warned IBM users to beware of a Trojan called **HARDUTIL.EXE** which ruined a user's hard disk. Megacom cannot find out whether this is true or not. Can you tell us anything?

New MSX2. Japan's JVC has released its advanced new HC-90 MSX2 computer. It has 64k RAM, 128k VRAM and graphics similar to Amiga. These sleek, new generation MSX2 machines can be used for digitising images and manipulating high resolution graphics. However, our relationship with the Japanese Yen doesn't make their future look too rosy here. The HC-90 sells for 168000 Yen, which converts to something like $2000 in Australia. Probably too much for a machine with Amiga-like graphics but slower processing power.

Relief for C128. Replacement ROM sets for the C128 and 1571 disk drive are now available. Faults corrected by these ROMs include "chatter" on single sided disks and the frustrating "device not present" message on hard wired C128's. The ROM sets (from Commodore dealers) should be fitted only by an authorised Commodore service centre. You have been warned.

Sega hints. Eclipse Software has produced a range of hint books for the popular Dotsoft adventure games which run on Sega, which still has a hard core of users. Titles are Ninja the Search for the Statue, Treasure Hunt on Skull Island, King Solomon's Mines-Part I, The Secret of Bastow Manor, The Case of the Mad Mummy, Thermo Nuclear War Games and The Search for the Alien. The books are made to take plenty of heavy wear and are $5 each or $30 for all seven, all prices postpaid. Computatronics is the distributor.

New Amiga x 3. Flies on the Commodore wall tell us that the big C has not just one new Amiga but THREE on the way. The exciting names are B500, B2000 and A3000. They're faster, have a minimum of 1 megabyte memory and are planned to take Commodore well into the 1990's. Keep listening. This is just the start.

Atari again. 3 new computers and a Laser printer from Atari are to be released in Australia. First is the XE games machine - successor to the grand-daddy of games machines, the 2600. The XE is compatible with all existing Atari 8 bit software and has its own range of cartridge based games. It's also a computer. Next is the Mega ST range - Atari's challenge to Apple Mac. There's the ST2 and the ST4, with 1 megabyte and 4 megabytes of RAM respectively. They'll run all current ST software. The Laser printer works with Mega and ST computers and seems aimed at the desktop publishing market - with a pricing advantage over Apple's offerings. Finally, Atari now have an IBM compatible, the PC1. it boasts a higher clock speed than most clones, comes with graphics cards and runs in the GEM environment. Onya, Jack!

Geritol for C64. The Mr. Chips of computers, the venerable C64 is about to get a sensational update. This will be in the form of a built-in 3.5" disk drive with other titivations such as IBM compatibility. Price will be under $1000 and it will have a horsey name. Don't let anyone tell you it's just a rumour - we've SEEN it.

New Amstrad. Aiming directly at the business sector, Amstrad have now released the new PCW 9512. It's basically an update of the PCW 8512 small business computer. Amstrad seems tc be nibbling away at the market and earning a solid reputation in the process. Look for the new laptop and new home computers under the Sinclair label.

Mr. Radio wins 'em. In a spectacular multi-media ad. campaign, Commodore has firmed its grip on the Oz home computer market. Spearheading the campaign has been legendary radio king, John (Hello Australia) Laws. Commodore isn't saying what it all cost, but you can bet the bottom line was a telephone number figure. Like Rolls Royces, Laws doesn't come cheap. We're told that Mars Road is becoming known as Smile Street, so Lawsie must be pulling 'em in OK.

PC88 - no refunds. Held at Sydney's glitzy new Darling Harbour tourist trap 20-23 March. For Megacom's camera-laden reporting crew, this laid an egg. We had to fill out forms first (why?) and were then ordered from desk to desk before they took our money and let us in. Largely unimaginative stands, bored-looking exhibitors, pinch-penny lighting and a suffocating plethora of compatibles was the impression we came away with.

EWS

Amstrad, Atari, Microbee and Tandy showed up, but Commodore and Dick Smith were absent this year. Microbee were polite and helpful, and Atari was wowing 'em with demos. 20 minutes before close, we tried to get something to eat. "Only sammiches," said the catering penguin disinterestedly. We asked about the hot pies and quiche (?) visible in the open trays of the keep-it-warm thingy. "Nope. Only sammiches." The sangers glared threateningly at us from behind their cling wrap so we opted to stay hungry instead of living dangerously. Back at the entrance, we asked for our money back on the ground that the show had been monumentally boring. Ms. Icy-cool "We DON'T give refunds, dear." What was that someone said about banana republic?

Super Atari coming. Looks like Atari will be using the incredible Inmos Transputer (Blitter) Chip to build a new super computer. Capable of 1000 millíon instructions per second, it runs at a clock speed of 25 MHz and gives full animation on each pixel. It will certainly put the cat amongst the pigeons, but the big question is - WHEN?

C64 & C128 to Amiga. American software house, Central Coast Software, has released a new product which lets you transfer your C64 and C128 ASCII files to Amiga format. You can also transfer C64 BASIC programs into Amiga BASIC. It supports 1541, 4040, 1570 and 1571 disk formats and converts PET ASCII to AmigaDOS ASCII. No Australian distributor is known at this time.

In your lap. Apple is said to be coming out with a laptop Mac soon. Betcha Commodore follow with ditto Amiga. **Goodness, gracious.** Commodore are to supply components for C64, C128 and Amiga to Commander Computers, India. (60% owned by Commodore International.) Deal's worth over A$1000 million, market is 870 million people. Tap-tap, tappity-tap... **Amstrad Australia?** (Unconfirmed). AWA-Mitsubishi will no longer be handling Amstrad here. Instead, Amstrad will set up its own operation, HQ Sydney. **Price War.** Atari and Commodore are shaping up for a real sales slug-fest. Both are investing big bucks in ads. (So far, not in Megacom, ah, well.) Watch out for some super deals. **K-Mart pricing.** Sega snoops say the games machine has been seen at various Sydney K-Marts at $70, $99, $150 and more. Appears instructions were given to special them out, but individual stores can decide how much they'll take off. Shop around. **OKI for big C.** Possible badge engineering in A$12 million deal between Commodore and IPL-Datron. Big C will market OKI-made printers for everything from C64 to Amiga and PC range. Keen pricing is promised. **Boost for 520ST.** Atari is to upgrade future 520STs with a new 1 megabyte double sided disk drive. Replaces current 500k s/sided. All part of the one-upmanship stakes, folks.

If you're a PR person, or a product manager, or a reader with an ear to the ground and you have some hot news you want to pass along - send it to Megacom Magazine and we'll tell the world. Please include your name and address/telephone number so we can confirm if necessary. We do NOT reveal confidential sources. The buck stops here. Mail to:

News Editor,
Megacom Magazine,
89B Foster Street,
Dandenong 3175, VIC.

COMPUTERS

G O Y J T T H G J B B V C H L F T O
X B T N G T B Y A P A Z M L C J F B
A G I M A F T P Y T U I X O S J W F
S M V N H C P W A C C L M P E B O H
R O S M K S N R A R D M E U S Z U B
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C R I L D D O T T O N L E A C D G C
O J G O E M A W L C C E P V G H K L
Y R J O F Q X I C U T O R P I E W S
T G P K E L U J K I M A C L A L S F
Y N E Y R B P J N I B N N W G J O W
R P G Q A N X R N Q Q M G D J B P S
A B J S D K Q U H C J W E D Y P O E

Find these hidden words in the puzzle:

amiga
apple
cat
commodore
kaypro
multitech
osborne
sharp
tandy
amstrad
atari
coco
ibm
microbee
olivetti
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Jack's giant-

ATARI SM124
ATARI

killers

Atari muscles in on the market with its miraculous ST range. Harmik Khoronian reveals all.

Jack Tramiel is chief wallah at Atari and something of a legend in the frenetic computer business.

He bought the ailing Atari company back in 1984 and started out on a massive reorganisation.

The result of his injection of corporate geritol has been the extraordinary ST range which comprises the 520ST and the 1040ST.

ATARI'S BEST EVER

They are like no other computers Atari has ever made and such is the effect they have had on the market here that the price war is really hotting up. There must be a lot of nervous sales execs in other companies.

Jack's ST giant killers are both very serious home and business computers.

For the technically minded, the ST's are based on the powerful Motorola 68000 processor, which is a 16/32 bit chip running at a clock speed of 8 MHz. Compare that with IBM's PC at 4.77 MHz, Amiga at 7.16 MHz and Macintosh at 7.83 MHz.

The 520ST and the 1040ST are basically the same, the main difference being that the 520ST has 512K of memory and a single sided 360K disk drive, while the 1040ST has 1024K of memory and a double sided 720K disk drive.

SUPER FRIENDLY

They're both incredibly user-friendly. If you have never laid a finger on a computer before, you'll find the Atari ST's just about as easy to use as your neighbourhood Coke machine. It's how computers should have been from the start.

Their software is literally amazing, with super-graphics games that give a new meaning to the word "entertainment". They have everything from arcade dazzlers to Star Glider, Bowling, Baseball, Shoot-em-ups, ingenious Strategy games and lots more.

I must say that their Flight Simulator is the best I have ever seen on any computer. It's so realistic, I expected to hear a stewardess asking "Coffee, tea or milk?"

BUSINESS SOFTWARE

Looking over their range of programs, it's clear that Atari are going to make a solid pitch for the business market. Some of the titles are:

Sales Pro. A complete point of sales and inventory control program. If you operate a wholesale, retail or mail order business, you'll wonder how you got by without it. Stores up to 2 billion records, does mailing labels and lists, gives perpetual inventory control, end-of-day summaries - even generates re-order lists.

Jack's Giant Killers

Haba Mailroom. A mail list and manager for all your customer lists. No need to learn complicated commands - drop-down menus allow you to find any record with lightning speed. A very versatile program that will even print out names and addresses on sticky labels.

Cheque Minder. An accountant you don't have to feed. Perfect for home or business, and dead easy to use. Just give it the details and it does the rest. It reminds you when bills are due and can even print cheques.

DB-Man. An enormously powerful database program which is similar to DBase III on the IBM

VIP Professional. Very powerful spreadsheet program which incorporates the three essential applications of Lotus 1-2-3. Easy to use.

Thunder. A spelling checker with a 50,000 word dictionary. Corrects your spelling as you write, or will check an entire document. (Don't ask me why they called it Thunder.)

OTHER FEATURES

Because the ST's have industry standard ports, you can hook up almost any printer or modem available.

They also have 5pin DIN Midi in and Midi out ports which lets you connect all sorts of musical equipment such as synthesisers and electronic drums. These ports also can be used for networking. Atari have certainly done their homework.

The inside is just as impressive as the outside. Quality of assembly is very high, the PC board is well laid out and the soldering is immaculate.

Both models come with a mouse, have a built-in power supply, and a 96-key keyboard with 10 function keys. Even the most pernickety typist will find the keyboard easy to use. It has just the right touch and doesn't tire you.

I'll be the first to admit that I'm biased. Nonetheless, being totally objective, I believe the ST's are such good value that they'll give both the Amiga and the Macintosh a really hard time. IBM just doesn't compare.

Get a test drive soon. There's an Atari ST in your future.

PRICES:

At the time of going to press, the 520ST was $999 mono and $1248 colour and the 1040ST was $1298 mono and $1548 colour.

Boost your ad campaign with Megacom musclepower!

Whatever product or service you're selling to Australia's giant home computer market, MEGACOM Magazine is the place to do it. Every issue, we deliver you an estimated national readership of 18,000+ consumer, trade and media enthusiasts PLUS a big slice of the New Zealand market! We're the hottest new computer magazine in the business and we're ready to give your selling the boost you're looking for. Phone us or drop us a line and we'll send you our rate card pronto.

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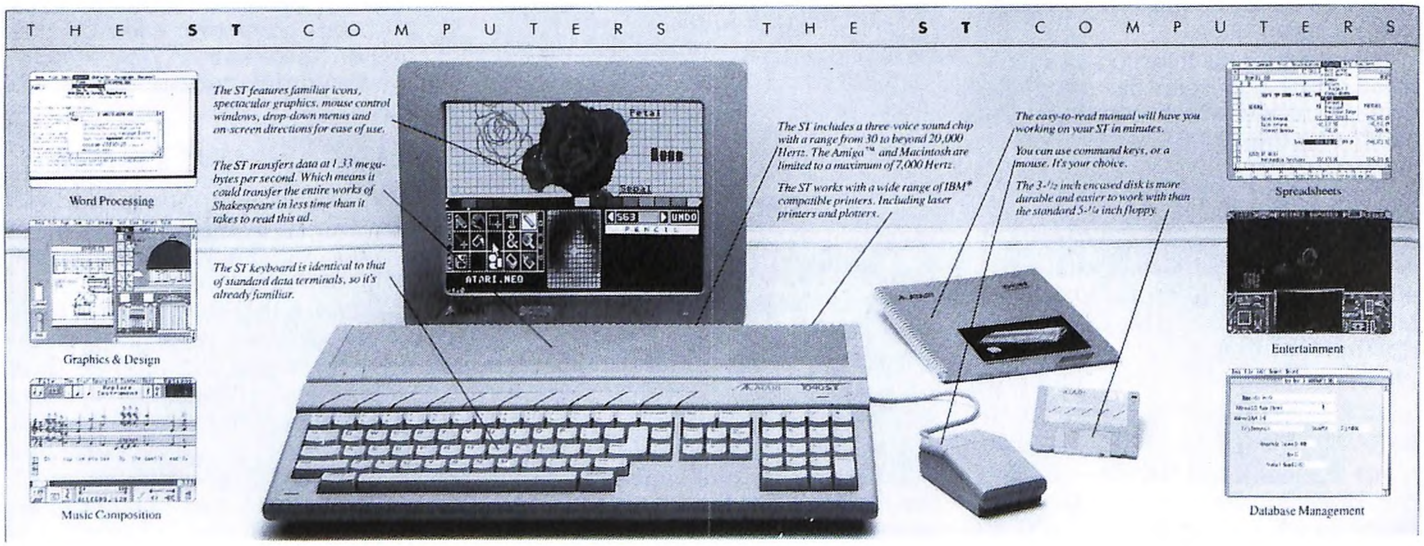

The ST features familiar icons, spectacular graphics, mouse control windows, drop-down menus and on-screen directions for ease of use.

The ST transfers data at 1.33 megabytes per second. Which means it could transfer the entire works of Shakespeare in less time than it takes to read this ad.

The ST keyboard is identical to that of standard data terminals, so it's already familiar.

The ST includes a three-voice sound chip with a range from 30 to beyond 20,000 Hertz. The Amiga™ and Macintosh are limited to a maximum of 7,000 Hertz.

The ST works with a wide range of IBM compatible printers. Including laser printers and plotters.*

The easy-to-read manual will have you working on your ST in minutes.

You can use command keys, or a mouse. It's your choice.

The 3-½ inch encased disk is more durable and easier to work with than the standard 5-¼ inch floppy.

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SPECIALISTS

- HOME COMPUTERS
- BUSINESS COMPUTERS
- IBM COMPATIBLES
- DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Here is just a very small taste of some of our entertainment software from E.C.P. (Entertainment & Computer Products) for the ATARI ST computers:

Star Wars
Bards Tale
Sky Fox
Marble Madness
Arctic Fox
D.E.G.A.S. Elite
Chess Master 2000
Not A Penny More
Music Construction Set

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Telecom's bouncing baby is barely out of nappies and it's already a dollar-earning hit. Valentino Rossi takes you on a guided tour of Viatel.

SEGA SC-3000H
Personal Computer
CR
SHIFT
POWER
ON LINE
CD

There was one side to computers which always seemed to be mysterious and out of reach for me, either through ignorance or lack of funds. The modem has been, and still is one of the more expensive add-ons which can be purchased, and for the average home computer user will probably be low on their shopping list. Most people would find it hard to justify buying one - after all, there isn't really all that much you can do with them, is there?

Well, you may have to think again because there is a whole new world out there which will be completely unknown to you if you do not have a modem - the world of Viatel.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

What is Viatel? There has been a lot of hype put out by Telecom over the past year or two about electronic shopping and banking and so forth, and how your life can be made so much easier by using these services. There is another side to Viatel which you will not see in television advertisements, but which is currently the more popular aspect of the entire service. What you might call the 'fun' side.

Viatel is run by Telecom, and is a Videotex service; that is, it follows a format which has been more or less standardised, and given the name Videotex. Data is transmitted through the telephone system and can be received with either a special Videotex receiver and displayed on a television screen, or with your own home computer using a modem and appropriate communications (Videotex emulator) software. Virtually any combination of computer, modem and software can be used, as long as the modem has a baud rate of 1200/75 (the baud rate is the speed at which the modem sends and receives data. The Viatel computers can only transmit and receive at one specific rate, and your modem must match this rate to be of any use.)

COST AND SERVICE

Nothing comes for free however, and Viatel is no exception. There is a set subscription fee of $10.50 per quarter for home (non-business) users, and a charge per minute for the amount of time spent connected to the system ('connect-time') of six cents during off-peak times (6 pm to 6 am on weekdays, and all weekend) and nine cents at all other times. Occasionally (read 'rarely') Telecom will enable users to 'look around' the Viatel databases at a reduced connect fee. This is usually two cents per minute for twenty-four hours on a Sunday. Apart from this, there are also 'frame charges'. A frame is one screenful of data, whether it is share prices or some graphic rendition. Depending on several factors, this charge could be anything from two cents to twenty-five

1
ABC 2
DEF 3
GHI 4
JKL 5
MNO 6
PRS 7
TUV 8
WXY 9
MUTE
*
OPER 0
REDIAL
#
RINGER
OFF
ON
COMPULINK
Micro Modem 4
SEGA SegaCom
Copyright ACME Software 1985
Communications Cartridge for use with Sega SC3000H or SC3000 model computer
SEGA SegaCom

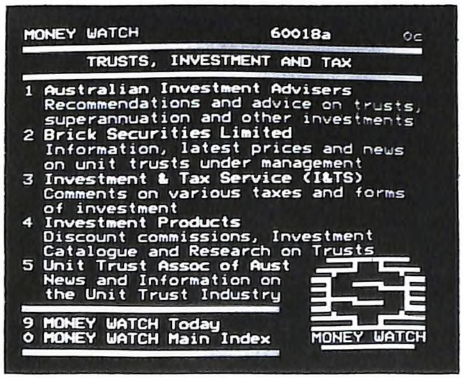
Main photograph by courtesy of Compulink Corporation, others by courtesy of Viatel.

dollars, but does not often exceed about fifty cents, with an average of five to ten cents. Still other services require an addition to the connect charge, usually two cents per minute extra.

Upon subscribing, you will receive from Telecom a 'Directory and Magazine'. This is about eighty pages thick, and contains a complete index of services (i.e. topics, subjects or items) in alphabetical order, with the page number on which the 'front page' (main menu or index) of the service may be found. A list of service providers (those individuals or companies which provide the services, usually known as SPs) is also given. For example, you could look up a subject such as 'Computers', or a computer company such as 'Commodore'. The directory also has a Magazine section with articles of general interest, such as new services or notable happenings. Viatel itself provides these indices, and more. However, to browse through such a lengthy list say, fifteen minutes, will cost you (at nine cents/minute) about $1.35. As you can see, it's cheaper to look it up first.

THE OFFERINGS

What does Viatel have to offer? There is a large range of databases available (a database is all the information or data which someone has to offer) and one can quite easily become lost in the maze. A better question would be 'What does Viatel have to offer me?' I think it safe to assume that 99% of readers of Megacom are either computer owners or users, or intend to purchase one in the near future, so I will use the average home computer user as the basis for the question. About two-thirds of Viatel subscribers fall into this category, according to statistics provided by Telecom, on Viatel itself.



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MONEY WATCH                      60018a      0c
        TRUSTS, INVESTMENT AND TAX
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  superannuation and other investments
2 Brick Securities Limited
  Information, latest prices and news
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  Comments on various taxes and forms
  of investment
4 Investment Products
  Discount commissions, Investment
  Catalogue and Research on Trusts
5 Unit Trust Assoc of Aust
  News and Information on
  the Unit Trust Industry

9 MONEY WATCH Today
0 MONEY WATCH Main Index          MONEY WATCH
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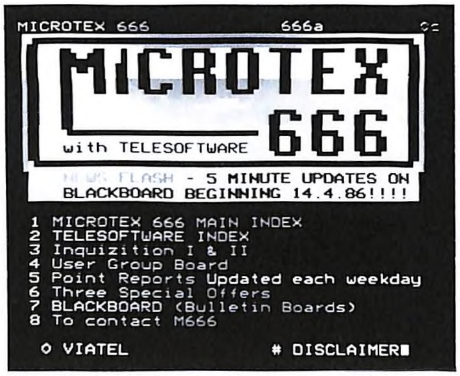
There are many practical uses for Viatel. Banking services are supplied by banks, credit unions, building societies and financial institutions. Booking airline tickets is possible from the major airlines, or you can just look up the cost of flying between destinations that you specify. Teleshopping is a major part of Viatel, and it is possible to browse through catalogues from many different shops, and place orders once you have decided on an item, without ever leaving your chair. Products of all types are available, not just computer-related items (although these feature largely, for obvious reasons). Agricultural equipment, alarms, audio equipment, books and magazines, stationery, car accessories, communications equipment and computers are available, to mention just a few. Classified advertisements may be placed or browsed through, from SPs such as the Melbourne Trading Post and the Age newspaper (which correspond to the respective publications) as well as smaller stores. There are many more such services, but it would take a small volume to list them all.



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MICROTEX 666                666a         0c
  MICROTEX
  with TELESOFTWARE     666
   NEWS FLASH - 5 MINUTE UPDATES ON
   BLACKBOARD BEGINNING 14.4.86!!!!
1 MICROTEX 666 MAIN INDEX
2 TELESOFTWARE INDEX
3 Inquizition I & II
4 User Group Board
5 Point Reports Updated each weekday
6 Three Special Offers
7 BLACKBOARD (Bulletin Boards)
8 To contact M666

 0 VIATEL                  # DISCLAIMER■
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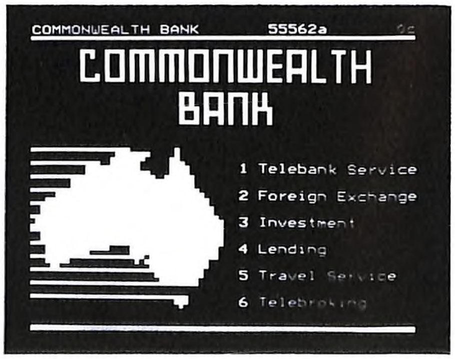
If you have one of the more popular makes of computer, and your communications software will allow it, you can make use of a library of software which is available on Viatel. Known as 'Telesoftware', these programmes can be 'downloaded', or transferred to your computer. This procedure differs from computer to computer. Some telesoftware is free, however most will cost a certain amount for each frame that the program occupies. The average-length program will cost only a few dollars. At this time, the major supplier of telesoftware is Microtex 666, available on Viatel page 666.

INFO GALORE

Another major feature of Viatel, perhaps on a par with the tele-services mentioned above is the information-providing facilities which can be called upon. There is a staggering amount of information to be found and dealt with so much so that Telecom has recently installed a second Viatel computer. Even so, much of this data is stored on the Service Provider's (SP) own computer/s, but you can still get it through Viatel by means of 'Gateways'. A Gateway is simply the means by which the main computers send and retrieve information from the SP, and is almost invisible to the user apart from the fact that there is a short delay as the data is sent between the SP and Viatel. A surcharge is usually made when accessing SPs via a Gateway.

Information provided is spread over a wide spectrum. Virtually any topic you could want can be found somewhere in the pages of Viatel, from consumer advice to horoscopes to coins and stamps. You could take a look at correspondence courses available, dates of events, employment statistics, food information, handicapped persons' information, household hints, the list goes on and on. Usually more than one SP provides info on any given subject, so it is possible to make comparisons. For example, holiday advice is provided by more than a dozen SPs. Other types of information are available, such as results of sporting events or major lottery draws. If you can't be bothered watching the entire news service on television, you could check out the major headlines from one of several sources on Viatel. Feel like a laugh? Look up J for Joke, and you will get just that, usually at a few cents for each. If you have a printer, and your software will allow it, you may print out what you see on your screen for later perusal, to save costs (by 'logging off', or disconnecting yourself from Viatel and reading the material afterwards).



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COMMONWEALTH BANK          55562a      0c
        COMMONWEALTH
            BANK
                     1 Telebank Service
                     2 Foreign Exchange
                     3 Investment
                     4 Lending
                     5 Travel Service
                     6 Telebroking
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Here now: the revolutionary $699 "AutoCom" modem with word processing capability!

$699
COMPULINK Micro Modem 1
SegaCom

No computer needed! Amazing "AutoCom" comes with its own phone, keyboard, built-in electronic phone directory and real time clock, PLUS fully automatic dialling, page downloading AND word processing capability!

At $699, nothing else comes within cooee of the ingenious new Australian-designed "AutoCom"! If you've been thinking about getting a modem for home or for business, THIS is the only one to look at.

NO COMPUTER NEEDED!

Now there's no need to tie up your computer when you're using Videotex, Viatel, or Bulletin Boards. "AutoCom" has its own fully-featured intelligent keyboard. (You can even play games on it if you want to).

PUSH BUTTON PHONE!

"AutoCom" has its own, Telecom-approved push button phone with all the features you expect, such as last number re-dial and mute button. As well, the modem has its own built-in speaker so you can listen in with hands off!

NUMBER DIRECTORY!

With "AutoCom", you can store up to 100 telephone numbers electronically and call up any of them via the keyboard. Battery back-up means you don't lose numbers when you turn the unit off.

AUTOMATIC LOG-ON!

"AutoCom" automatically dials into communication systems, automatically transmits your identification number and password. No more fumbled numbers, no more costly re-dials, no more wasted time — "AutoCom" makes talking to the world easy!

REAL TIME CLOCK!

Just tell your "AutoCom" what the time is when you turn on, and it will automatically start its internal clock running! Great for keeping an eye on costs — and because it's linked to the automatic features of "AutoCom", you can program it to dial at any time AS WELL as to record information for later screen playback!

WORD PROCESSING!

With the optional 28K word processing cartridge and interface, "AutoCom" becomes an indispensable all-purpose unit for home, education or business. Serial interface connects to almost any printer. For students, writers, clubs, and any business where more than just everyday communication is needed, "AutoCom" is ideal.

FULLY GUARANTEED!

"AutoCom" carries our full 90 day warranty and comes complete with fully detailed instructions. It's backed by our Australia-wide sales and service network.

To place your order, simply complete and mail the coupon below, or if you would like to know more about "AutoCom", write direct or phone us. By all means, shop around first — we KNOW you won't find anything like "AutoCom" at anywhere near the price!

Compulink Corporation
290 Bay Street, Brighton 3186, VIC.
(Telephone (03) 596 2340)

Please send me (   ) "AutoCom" units.
I enclose cheque/money order for $699, plus forwarding and handling charge of $9.50, making a total of $708.50.

NAME ....
ADDRESS ....
....*P/CODE* ..

Please send me FREE information on:-

(   ) "AutoCom".
(   ) Word Processing unit.
(   ) Shop Window salesman.
(   ) Customised terminals.
(   ) Public Access Terminals.

VIATEL®

BULLETIN BOARDS

Even after all this, I have not mentioned a facet of Viatel which may well be the major source of interest to the majority of its users - the Bulletin Board (BB). BBs abound on Viatel, and this can be a problem, at least to your bank account. A BB really is like an electronic notice board, with, of course, some definite improvements. They started out as quite simple affairs in the early days, and have come a long way. The idea was to give people somewhere to leave notices or messages in a common area, so that anyone expecting a message would know where to look. Of course, the messages are open for all to see, so if a private matter is to be discussed then this is not the place (there is a way to communicate privately, which I will come to shortly). The messages were collected by the Viatel computer, given to the SP and the BB would be updated (i.e. the messages would be put on the Board) at the SP's leisure, usually at a given time each day or week, or perhaps every hour or so.

As the facilities (both the SP's and Telecom's) improved, the update intervals were reduced. Today, the most popular BBs are the ones which update instantly, or almost. After all, it takes time for your messages to be sent to Viatel and processed (obscene language removed automatically) and then be sent to the BB. Depending on the amount of people accessing Viatel at the one time, it may take twenty seconds or ten minutes. The BBs usually start showing signs of life after 6 pm (the start of the off-peak period) and are most used around nine to ten o'clock. Most BBs also have a facility whereby the last thirty or forty messages sent in can be browsed through, and as new messages come in, the old ones are pushed out. BBs are like a gathering place where Viatel users can have a chat, and much the same crowd can be 'seen' night after night, with new subscribers popping in now and then. There are no age limits or cultural barriers, as the user only reveals as much about themselves as they want. Distance is no obstacle either, as people from all over the country may hold a conversation at the same time. BBs may also have themes, such as a 'TV Board', 'Travel Board', 'Games Board' and more, where the general trend of the BB is as its name suggests. The date and time is usually displayed along with each message, and on some boards, the name of the person who sent in the message. The fact that most BBs do not add the sender's name to each message automatically is a point to note, because most people 'sign' their messages anyway, either with their real name (or nickname) or with some other name of their choice. The latter method is used most often, and as a result most people know each other by this name, which is usually something fanciful like 'Silver Flash'.

YOUR MAILBOX

A short time after subscribing, you will receive in the mail several reference cards showing how to use Viatel, and useful page numbers. You will also be given a Viatel number, a customer identity number and a personal password. The Viatel number is your 'Mailbox' number, and it is by using this number that others in Viatel can correspond with you. Messages may be left in your Mailbox, to be read in your own time. When you log on, you will be told if there are any new messages waiting for you. Your customer identity number is a ten digit number which should not be divulged to anyone, as it is your protection against someone else using Viatel in your name. To make even more certain of your security, a four-digit personal password is also provided, and this may be changed from time to time to foil any would-be 'hackers'. These latter two numbers must be given when connecting to the system.

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Game playing is another favourite activity on Viatel, and some unique games can be found there. It is possible to play a game of chess against an opponent in another state, or even have a solo flight in a flight simulator. Most games of this sort are very limited however, both by the graphics available (eight colours, but very low resolution) and the limitations of the medium itself (mainly speed). One type of game which has proven very successful is the 'multi-player' game, usually revolving around a role-playing theme. Dungeons and Dragons players will relish the chance to compete with or against many other people across the nation, all together in the same game. The players are usually charged an entry fee (which may be

• *Continued P21.*

MICROTEX 666

COMMUNICATIONS BREAKTHROUGH

Microtex 666 is the foremost publisher on Telecom Australia's national videotex service - Viatel

Take a giant step into the 21st century and join Microtex 666 today. Microtex is the largest and fastest growing information provider on Viatel and caters extensively for microcomputer users.

Feast from the ever changing software library - available for you to load straight into your micro and save on disk or cassette. There are over a THOUSAND programs from Australian, American and British software houses, all discounted and some absolutely free.

There's a 24 hour Bulletin Board services,one of the world's largest multi-player games, hardware and software shopping including a Trading Post and daily computer news.

All this and much more is part of the vast service linking thousands of Microtex and Viatel users across Australia, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

SUBSCRIBE TO: MICROTEX 666, now for 3, 6, or 12 months. PHONE:(03) 531 8411 for more details

or access page *666599# on VIATEL.

MSX IN OZ

It's riding high in Europe, so why hasn't it succeeded here? See the sparks fly as Roger Stockburger comes out fighting with the answers.

My first experience with MSX was in 1984 at the PC84 computer show at the Melbourne World Trade Centre.

First impressions were excellent. Sleek Japanese-Made computers, decent C64-style software (i.e. very good), a user-friendly BASIC, decent disk drives using the new 3.5" disks.

MSX has previously been launched overseas in countries such as Holland, the U.K., Germany and Japan (where it originated), and has had reasonable success in the U.K., but an overwhelming success elsewhere.

The MSX concept is about compatibility. In other words, you can use any peripheral or software title bearing the MSX logo on any other manufacturer's equipment bearing the MSX logo.

In my opinion, MSX failed to gain momentum here in Australia because the distributors such as Sony, Toshiba and Mitsubishi did not market the MSX systems properly. When did you ever see any advertising extolling the advantages of MSX? If the distributors had promoted as vigorously as Commodore do, things might have been different. So MSX has built up a small but solid user-base here in Australia with virtually no advertising. Software is plentiful if you know where to get it, and that is mostly from Mail-Order outfits, such as this club.

Apart from this club, other major MSX software distributors include L.P.G. software in Tasmania, Greensborough Computers in Melbourne and MSX computers and software in South Australia.

New software is constantly being released for the MSX system in Japan, and this then finds its way overseas.

The MSX system now has an updated version of the system: MSX2, which offers higher resolution graphics and other advanced functions. The only criticism of MSX2 is that it still uses the ageing Z80A CPU despite the abundance of 16-bit processer technology at low cost.

All MSX software runs perfectly on MSX2 hardware.

MSX2 is being sold here in Australia by Sony and Philips, but where is the advertising to let people know about it?

The only "MSX-only" magazine in Australia is MSX-SVI COMPUTER FORUM.

Germany publishes MSX Home Computer Aktiv, and MSX Revue.

The U.K. used to have MSX Computing until a recent change in sales-tax on magazines over there that forced the publishers out of business as people were not prepared to pay extra for the privilege of reading their favourite magazine.

By far the best MSX Magazine around originated from Japan: MSX MAGAZINE. It is excellent and very informative providing you can read Japanese and can afford to lay out $A20 for each monthly issue!

Most MSX software originating directly from Japan is on cartridge, providing simple "plug in 'n' go" convenience.

On the other hand, most of the Aackosoft breed of software from Holland and the U.K. tends to be cassette-oriented, clumsy and slow.

MSX is superior to the nearest competitors such as the Amstrad 464, the Commodore 64 and Sega because MSX offers a user-friendly BASIC, graphics and sound capabilities similar or better than the C64 and Amstrad's.

The only drawback on MSX is the shortage of software at the usual retail outlets such as K-MART.

The Australian MSX market is rather uncertain at this point of time.

Now-
the amazing
singing, dancing
& talking
Amiga!

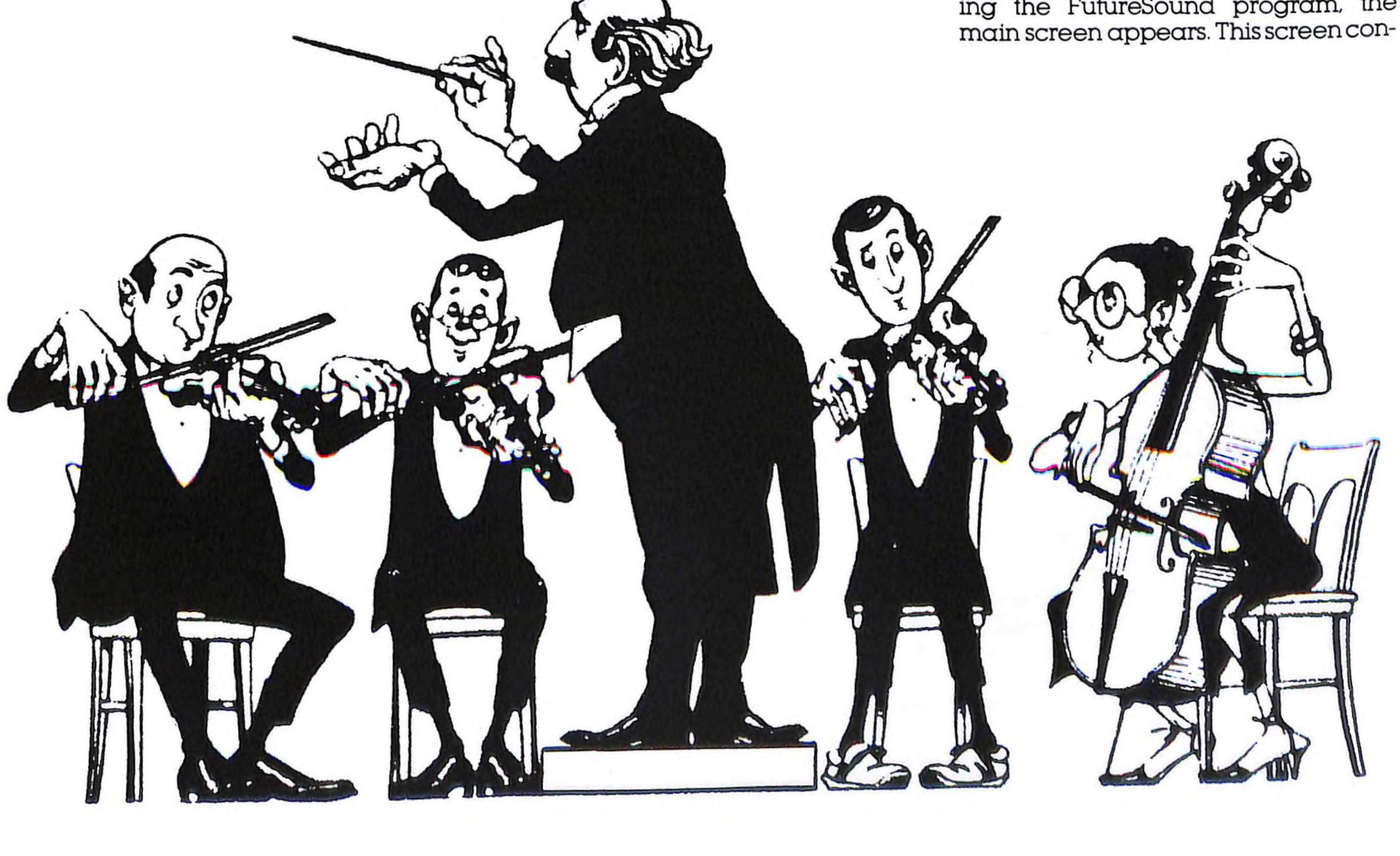
Take the plunge with Valentino Rossi as he puts FutureSound's new Audio Digitiser package through its paces:

If you have played a game on the Amiga recently, or heard a music program being used on it, then you will know that it has the capability for producing some quite impressive sounds. Far from the beeps and buzzes of past machines, the Amiga can be made to sound like an explosion or clash cymbals with equal ease, and remarkable fidelity. With a quality of sound (at its best) probably equalling that of an audio tape, and four separate channels with which to work, there was little doubt that before very long there would arrive on the market equipment which would enable you and me to make use of this feature.

One of the first to arrive on the scene, and the subject of review here, is FutureSound, by Applied Visions. FutureSound is essentially an analogue-to-digital converter, which receives the analogue signals (your voice, a dog barking, etc.) through a microphone (provided) and converts these sounds into digital form, then transmits this data to the computer through the parallel port in the Amiga. Once it has the information concerning these sounds safely within its memory, it is up to the computer and the supplied software to enable us, the user, to do with it what we will.

The FutureSound package contains a microphone, an operating manual and the FutureSound equipment itself. I must admit to a certain amount of disappointment upon first opening the box - visually, at least, FutureSound is quite unimpressive. The main apparatus is housed in a single plastic case, with a colour closely resembling that of the Amiga. It measures approximately 30 x 130 x 140mm, and has two input jacks in the front of the case (one for the microphone, the other for direct line input), a recording level adjustment knob (with no graduations marked around it) and a power indicator light which has the annoying habit of being lit at certain times when the equipment is actually turned off. At the rear of the housing is the cable which plugs into the parallel port at the rear of the Amiga. A pass-through facility has been included. That is, you can plug your printer into the FutureSound box, and the printer may then be used without changing plugs as long as the FutureSound is off. The microphone supplied is a Tandy/Realistic 500 ohm model, but any microphone with an impedance in the range of 200 to 800 ohms is suitable. As there is only one RCA type jack for the microphone input, one of the RCA plugs has been cut from the Y-type connector on the microphone's lead. This is done because FutureSound only uses monophonic sounds, though it will accept stereophonic input as long as it is channelled into a single line.

As I have said, there is little in the way of controls on the hardware itself, but the software which is included is the means for manipulating the sounds we record. The actual recording process is very simple, and almost no different to recording with a standard cassette recorder, except that the 'buttons' are on the screen. After loading the FutureSound program, the main screen appears. This screen con-



tains all of the data which can be displayed by the program, and is well set-out and simple to follow. Along the top of the screen is shown the amount of memory which is currently unused.

Four boxes, numbered 1 to 4, indicate which of the four tracks is being used, and below these is a window displaying a graph of the sound you are working on. This graph shows us what the sound 'looks like', and actually indicates the amplitude of the sound at certain intervals on a scale of -128 to +127. It is possible to magnify this graph so that a small section can be analyzed and worked on in more detail, and it is quickly seen that each peak and valley on the graph is made up of even more peaks and valleys. A sliding bar is the means of increasing/decreasing the magnification. It is also possible to isolate a portion of the graph, after which all actions made will only be performed on that particular portion, leaving the rest of the sound intact. For example, this can be a means of cutting out of a section of the sound and discarding the unwanted part.

Below the graph, there are six button-like controls which, according to the manual, can be found on any cassette recorder. The first five I would agree with, but I have yet to see a tape deck with a 'step' function (which allows the user to move through the sound in steps the size of the graph window). The first five are immediately recognizable and are self-explanatory. They are: Play, Record, Stop, Rewind and Fast Forward. Of course, these actions are performed on the sound in memory as there is no tape involved. There is a counter to tell us our position within the sound, much like that on a tape deck. There are also two other counters, one which tells us the starting location of the section of sound we are working on, and another to tell us the end location. The number which these counters indicate is actually the byte number within the sound, which is no more than a continuous string of bytes. Each byte represents the data for one 'sample' of sound, i.e. the smallest segment of sound which can be obtained.

There are four more boxes, each pertaining to a track, with more information concerning the sound data on that track as well as some more controls. Each box tells us the name we have given to that track (initially 'Empty'), as well as the rate of playback. The controls just mentioned adjust the playback speed, the volume of the track, and whether the track is to be played once for each press of the Play button, or repeated continuously until the Stop button is pressed.

There are no more controls available onscreen, but there are a few more indicators: a recording level monitor (RLM) coupled with a clipping indicator (which indicates when the recording level is too high); a sample rate indicator, a time indicator and a memory usage indicator. The sample rate indicator shows us the sampling rate; the time indicator displays the current length of recording time; and the memory usage indicator displays the amount of memory needed for the sound. When one of these numbers is altered, the others change to reflect the new values - more time, or a larger sampling rate, and the more memory that will be needed.

Aside from the controls mentioned, three option menus are provided. A Disk menu enables loading and saving of sounds either in the FutureSound format or IFF format (which is virtually the default industry standard with Amiga disk files), and also in a special format which allows your sound to be used in music programs as an 'instrument'. With this special format, a three-octave range of the sound is saved in the file rather than just the original sound itself.

A Track menu enables the clearing or resetting of one or more tracks, as well as the allocation of memory to a track, which must be done before anything can be recorded on that track.

The third and final menu option is called the Bag of Tricks, and gives us five more functions for 'special effects'. Reverse Sound does just that, allowing us to hear the sound played backward. Copy Sound lets us transfer the sound data from one track to another. Mix Sounds will combine the sounds from two tracks into a single track. Zero Sound simply clears the sound completely from a track while retaining the memory allocated to it. Finally, Scale Sound effectively makes the sound louder or softer, by specifying the maximum desired amplitude value. Any of these options can be performed on a portion of the track, rather than the entire track.

The way that FutureSound records sounds is by taking a 'sample' of the sound (or a 'snapshot') at predetermined intervals. The more samples that FutureSound takes, the better the quality of the recording. The number of samples taken per second is called the 'sampling rate'. FutureSound lets us control the sampling rate, can be as high as 28,000 samples/second (which is also the maximum which the Amiga can handle). By comparison, compact disk (CD) recordings are made in a similar fashion (i.e. digitally) and today's CD has a sampling rate of nearly double that of the FutureSound hardware. Keep in mind that CD technology is the state-of-the-art in sound reproduction, and a sampling rate of around 10,000 is quite acceptable for many applications.

Memory usage is directly related to the sampling rate: one sample consumes one byte. On a standard 512K system then, we have about 250K available to us for our sound data after the operating system and the FutureSound program itself have taken their share of memory. With a sampling rate of 28,000 (the maximum) we can record just under 4 seconds. If we need to use all four tracks, then we are left with less than a second on each track. Quite obviously, if any real musical arranging and editing is to be done with FutureSound, a memory expansion board will be needed.

For most other applications a smaller sampling rate of about 10,000 is adequate, allowing about 25 seconds of continuous sound. This is more than enough for perhaps one of FutureSound's main uses, that of creating sound effects. The exact method for doing this is largely left up to the individual, with the manual helping very little in this respect. I have found that playing around with the playback controls can produce some interesting effect, even with quite 'normal' sounds. For instance, speeding up a sound (increasing the rate at which it is played back) and looping it will give some interesting 'rapid-fire' sounds. Cutting out small sections of a longer sound and playing them back separately makes them sound entirely different, and quite unrecognizable from the original, complete sound. In order to use these sounds in your own programs, the FutureSound disk contains several routines for this purpose. The routines are written in the "C" programming language, and will load, play and stop a previously recorded sound file from either a "C" or BASIC program. A sample "C" program (with source code) is provided which will play up to four consecutive sound files, and hopefully serve as an example for your own programs.

The other main use would be that of creating sounds for use as 'instruments' in music programs. As previously mentioned, there is an option for saving sounds in a format usable by music programs called the "3-octave with repeat" format. It is important to be certain that the music program you choose can use the files created by FutureSound, as not all will use the same format. If you are not sure, ask your dealer which programs are suitable for use with FutureSound, and for your purposes.

A 38 page manual is provided which shows how to set up the equipment, record sounds and use the FutureSound program, and also contains a 'technical info' section which anyone could follow, but which would probably be exasperatingly simple to any real sound hobbyist or technician. There is also a "hints" section, but this leaves much to the imagination as it only provides one obscure "trick" for an interesting effect. A few more pages on techniques for sound recording would have been very helpful, but apparantly Applied Visions feel it is better to leave that aspect up to the user's imagination. I suppose the idea is not all that bad. Overall, the documentation is easy to follow and reasonably thorough in its explanation of the operation of the software, and so is quite satisfactory.

Would FutureSound be of any use to you? If you are a professional programmer who needs to be able to create his own sound effects, a music-/sound hobbyist who cringes at the prospect of paying for true four-track recording equipment, or if money is no consideration to you, then I would probably say "yes". For the average home computer user, I would say that there are far more useful ways in which to spend $600 on your Amiga. While sound digitising can be a lot of fun, the novelty (as with any other similar gadget) wears off very quickly, and you will be left with an expensive piece of equipment sitting largely unused on a shelf somewhere, to be retrieved when you want to impress some friends for an evening. In all fairness, I must say that FutureSound performs exactly as it should, and lives up to most of the billing given it. Worth getting a demonstration.

*Test package supplied for MEGACOM by Acme Software (03) 596 6211. Available through selected Amiga dealers.

VIATEL®

• *Continued from P16.*

for maps, etc. to be sent to them) and are charged a set fee, perhaps fifty cents, whenever they wish to submit a move. A prize is usually offered for the winners in states where this is allowed.

GETTING THE BILL

Your Viatel bill is kept separate from the normal telephone bill, and comes on a quarterly basis. How much should you expect to pay for the privilege of being able to access Viatel? If you log-on, say, three times a day for ten minutes each time (assuming off-peak rates) the total per week just for this connect time would be 30 mins x 6 cents/minute + $3.78 (cost of 21 local calls) = $16.38/week. In four months there are sixteen weeks, so our total now comes to 16 x $16.38 = $262.08. And remember, I have taken into account neither frame charges nor other costs such as subscribing to an SP in order to make use of their BBs or other such services. Another factor is whether or not you will have a telephone line put in to be used as your 'Viatel line', or use an existing line for the purpose, as the 'phone must be off the hook (i.e. the line connected) during the entire access period. It is not unheard of for a Viatel bill to be as high as $1,000 (even twice this) however someone with reasonable restraint should be able to take advantage of the system at about $100 - $200 per quarter. Is it worth it? It is up to you to weigh the benefits against the costs, and to decide whether you can make Viatel work for you. If you intend to make some serious use of it, then it may well be worth your while. If your intention is purely for entertainment value, then you may have to think a bit harder. There is no doubt in my mind, however, that systems such as Viatel really are the way of the future.

MEGA POKES FOR YOUR C64

Is the kid up the street slaughtering you at your favourite game? Does your granny zap the aliens before you even see them? It's time you learned a little creative cheating. David Morrow and Andrew Jamieson let their pokes out of the bag to make you king of the keyboard.

Nemisis: To disable sprite to sprite collision press shift and space four times, something should appear in the top left corner of screen, press 5 and get zapping.

Krakout: Unlimited bats, reset and type

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POKE35220,200
SYS16035 starts game.
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Bomb Jack II: For infinite energy, reset then enter

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POKE10715,234
POKE10716,234
POKE10717,234
SYS15146 to restart game.
```

Thrust: Press function keys 5 and 7 together to slow down the game.

Sentinel Bug: On first screen absorb the sentinel as usual, but release almost all of your energy creating robots, trees or boulders, then hyperspace with three units of energy, and behold the code to screen 0000 is shown. No, no don't clap just send money!

Future Knight: Press the keys 4,7,9,E,U,J and M. PRESTO infinite lives!

SCOOP

Amiga's Hidden Messages

A MEGACOM exclusive by Jerry Blick

We had heard rumours about it for months: If you hit a certain sequence of keys on the Amiga 1000, up on the screen would flash a secret message - apparently hidden somewhere in the chipwork by a disgruntled programmer.

Everyone we spoke to seemed to know about it, but nobody knew how to get the message - complete with THE magic word - onto the screen. It all seemed too fantastic anyway, and we guessed it was a ploy devised by Commodore to build market awareness for the 1000.

But when we spoke to them, CBM (who are normally very generous with information) seemed curiously reticent to discuss it. Then they dropped the 1000 from the Amiga range and the news noses around here started twitching all over again.

Just before this issue was about to go to press, one of our highly trusted moles sidled up to the Editor's desk, dropped an envelope on top of Ed's half-eaten corned beef and tomato sandwich, rifled the phone-money box and then slunk away down the back stairs. Our moles have a great sense of the dramatic.

Ed opened the envelope cautiously and peeked inside. (Just checking to be sure it wasn't one of THOSE blue forms.) Obviously satisfied he was still safe, he withdrew a crumpled sheet and started reading it as he took another bite (byte!) at his CB&T sanger.

His hands started to shake and he went very red in the face. That's nothing unusual for Ed - he does it every time we submit a petty cash voucher. But this time he was grabbing at the phone with one hand and thumping his desk with the other. Clearly, something of great import had affected him. It was our mole's note. He had brought us the Amiga formula! Here it is:

"Hold down both SHIFT keys and both ALT keys simultaneously. Then, pressing the keys from F1 to F0 will reveal a message for each key. Then press the right AMIGA key (with SHIFT and ALT keys still depressed) and eject the disk in drive 0. This reveals another message. Then position the mouse cursor over the back gadget and re-insert the disk to reveal the final message. I think that's right."

Not having an Amiga 1000 (Ed insists we do quite well on our heavily Araldited Micro-Ace) we haven't been able to check our mole's info out. If it works, well we were first with the news. If it doesn't, you can guess who'll have to refill the phone-money box.

WARNING!

If you are offended by vulgar or obscene language, DO NOT attempt to use the Amiga formula. Apparently, one of the phrases used is offensive.

Living dangerously with CoCo

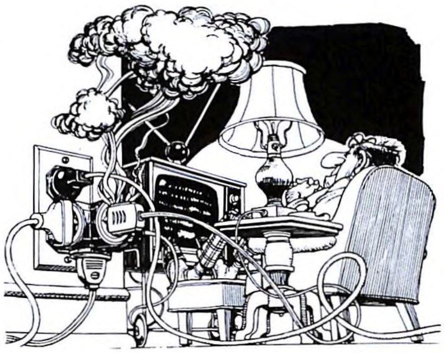
Country life has its problems for computer users: our erstwhile rural correspondent, Dennis Whitton, tells you what it's like.

Way back in the days just before the C64 was released, I decided that I wanted to buy a Computer. Tandy had brought out this new one called a Colour Computer, which was to become known as the CoCo to all its owners. It had 16k RAM (WOW!) and an extended basic vocubulary, called by Tandy, "Extended Basic".

So I drove the 60 miles to Dubbo, and bought one. On the way home I got a bit worried about things going wrong with it, because it was being bumped around on the seat due to the road being so rough, and the 3 miles of dirt to the farm was worse. "You're just being silly", I thought to myself.

I pulled in at the house in a haze of dust and excitement. My own Computer! I sat for a while in the silent car revelling in that thought, when a sound near my feet caused me to look down. A largish king brown snake was uncoiling itself from under my seat and looked as if it had every intention of biting me. I leaped out, and was followed by a long thin thing. So I jumped back in and locked the door. Carefully, I looked out the window. There, on the road was a length of garden hose. Sure enough, between my legs, was an even more unamused snake with even more intentions of biting me.

I heaved at the door handle, but it wouldn't open, (it was locked) so I panicked and yelled and stamped my feet up and down. The snake must have become worried about being trodden on by this mad human, so it moved to the other side of the car. I needed to get something between us, so I used the computer. If you are thinking this was not wise, normally you would be right, but I was desperate. The snake's attention was no longer fixed on me, and it started striking the box giving me time to unlock the door and open it. Once again, I leaped out and in one movement found myself on the roof, clutching the computer. Also clutching the computer was the snake, its fangs having got caught in the cardboard. It let go (I didn't luckily), and got away.



I set the CoCo up, plugged it in, and wondered if it still worked. I didn't like my chances of getting a warranty job done if it didn't. Would Mike the store owner understand?

Me: My computer broke
Mike: How?
Me: I bashed a snake with it.

That sounds exceptionally silly. Fortunately, IT WORKED!! and I entered that terrific world of computer users.

After an entry like that, this CoCo should have no more troubles at all, I said to myself. I hate myself saying things like that, because things conspire to prove me wrong every time. This time was no exception.

Thinks: "Not much more could go wrong"

Not that very instant, but six months later, things went wrong. A hole in the roof directed a stream of water onto the CoCo during a particularly bad storm. "This is the end," I thought as I emptied about two litres out. I took it back to Dubbo for a checkup. I asked for a new keyboard because the old one was crappy, and a 64k upgrade, if feasable. It was, they did, it worked. I now had access to a whole bunch of games for the model 2 CoCo that required "Min 32k RAM + joystick".

And then came Viatel. At last! A database that interested me, and (more importantly) I could afford. I registered, and in late 1985 became a heavy user when the Microtex Bulletin Boards went to 2 minute updates, instead of 10. Nowadays they update almost as fast as you can type, depending on the number of people using the system, or how fast you can type.

Christmas Eve 1985: Pete and I were on the front veranda watching a really spectacular lightning storm and drinking port, and cheering all the good flashes and awarding points (That wasn't much, 4.4? I'd have given it 3. Wow! 8 for that one! Yeh! Definitely an 8 etc.). A real close strike caused the roof to crackle with static.

Pete: You **did** unplug everything?
Me: Yep
Pete: The computer?
Me: Yep and microwave, fridge, freezer, stereo, clocks and toaster.

Another close strike (9! 9.5!) again caused the roof to crackle, but also caused that nasty bang electronic things make when a million volts run through them. The smell of burning insulation took us into the office with the computer. In the light of the torch we could see smoke coming from the cooling vents. Smoke was also coming from the modem. THE MODEM! It was still connected to the phone lines.

A few weeks and several hundred dollars later I had my CoCo back. It wasn't the same, and did some strange things at times. It was time to buy another computer, the old one was 4 years old, after all. The CoCo 3 had just come on the market, so I bought one. The old Grey Case CoCo was retired, in its box, under my bed. It rests there to this day.

The new CoCo 3 is terrific. At least I won't have the same problems I had with the old one. I mean, what else could go wrong....?

Win with...

Put your thinking cap on and play the M

OK you Atari ST users (or budding ST users) - here's your BIG chance to pick up some valuable gear absolutely FREE! The folks at Computer Oasis have given us some terrific prizes for Megaword (thanks, Lou!) and we've sweetened the kitty with 25 subscriptions to MEGACOM Mag. In all, there's over $1000 worth of lovely loot up for grabs! Megaword is fun - but it's tricky, so take care. Don't forget to read the rules...and good luck!

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Megaword!

egaword game - YOU could be a winner!

1	■	■	2		3 R	I	4	
	■	5	■	■		■	E	■
6		A	D	■	M	■	W	■
O	■		■	7 L	■	8 S	■	9
R	■	■	10	E		T	■	
■	11 S	■	A		■		■	I
12	■	■		■	■	13 P		
14	O		S	E	■	■	■	T

Megaword No. 1 Clues

ACROSS:

2: No evaluation needed for this.
6: Gives out-of-memory warning if program too long.
10: Loops won't work without this.
11: A little one could reveal trouble.
13: Re-arrangement of wrong letters gives a sampling.
14: Difficult to find out how many computer owners have one.

DOWN:

1: Could be a mistake.
3: Complex programs need a better one.
4: You might not use many.
5: Length depends on program requirements.
7: Not required in some BASIC programs.
8: Sometimes there seems to be no end.
9: See what you say.
10: Essential when you want to turn off.
12: --! It's morning!

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM: MEGAWORD No. 1

RULES & CONDITIONS: MEGAWORD NO. 1

1: Megaword No. 1 is a game of skill. Chance plays no part in determining winners. 2: The game is conducted by Megacom Magazine. 3: Entry is free, but an official entry form and Megaword game panel as published in Megacom Magazine must accompany each entry. 4: South Australian entrants may submit a photocopy or hand-drawn facsimile - limit one entry per person. 5: Prizes will be awarded on correctness of entries. Neatness will be a deciding factor in the event of there being an excess of correct entries. 6: The decision of the judges will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. 7: Prizes are not exchangeable for cash. 8: Entries are not returnable and only those received by the closing date will be judged. 9: Prizewinners will be notified by mail and a list will be published in Megacom Magazine. 10: Incomplete or illegible entries will be invalid. 11: An express condition of entry is that prize winners agree to the use of their name and address and/or photograph for publicity purposes. 12: Submission of an entry constitutes acceptance of these rules and conditions.

I have read the rules and conditions for Megaword No. 1, and am submitting my entry.

NAME: ....

ADDRESS: ....

.... Postcode: ....

MAIL TO:

MEGAWORD No. 1,
89B FOSTER ST., DANDENONG VIC. 3175
(Must reach us by last mail, Aug. 5, 1988.)

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PC your ST

One of the reasons that many computers are not looked at is that they are not IBM PC compatible. However, an IBM PC may be being used at work and there is a need for using programs at home, or it's just that the IBM PC type machines have the reputation. There are computers available which have greater memory, superior graphics and sound than the IBM PC, one such computer is the Atari ST.

Well for some time Apple Macintosh compatibility has been available for the ST with such packages as Mac Sac which does the job well. Now there is PC-Ditto for the ST. PC-Ditto allows an ST to run many IBM PC programs. In fact one of the good things about PC-Ditto, is in the manual that comes with the program, it lists which programs have been found to run with the program, there's quite a few!!!

The ST uses a 3.5 inch disk and most IBM PC programs are on a 5¼ inch format. So to use PC-Ditto - PC programs will have to be transferred to the 3.5 inch format. There are some IBM PC type computers around which use 3 and 1/5 inch disk, so it is possible to get software on this type of disk.

The first package I tried was Flight Simulator, to my relief it worked well (though the ST Flight Simulator is heaps better). Then I tried Microsoft Word which also worked well. Though the programs on PC-Ditto run a bit slower than they would on an IBM PC.

The reading material which comes with PC-Ditto is good, it also comes with a programme disk and a configuration disk which gives control over such factors as colour, etc....There is even a keyboard template that allows the ST to work like a PC keyboard, nice touch!

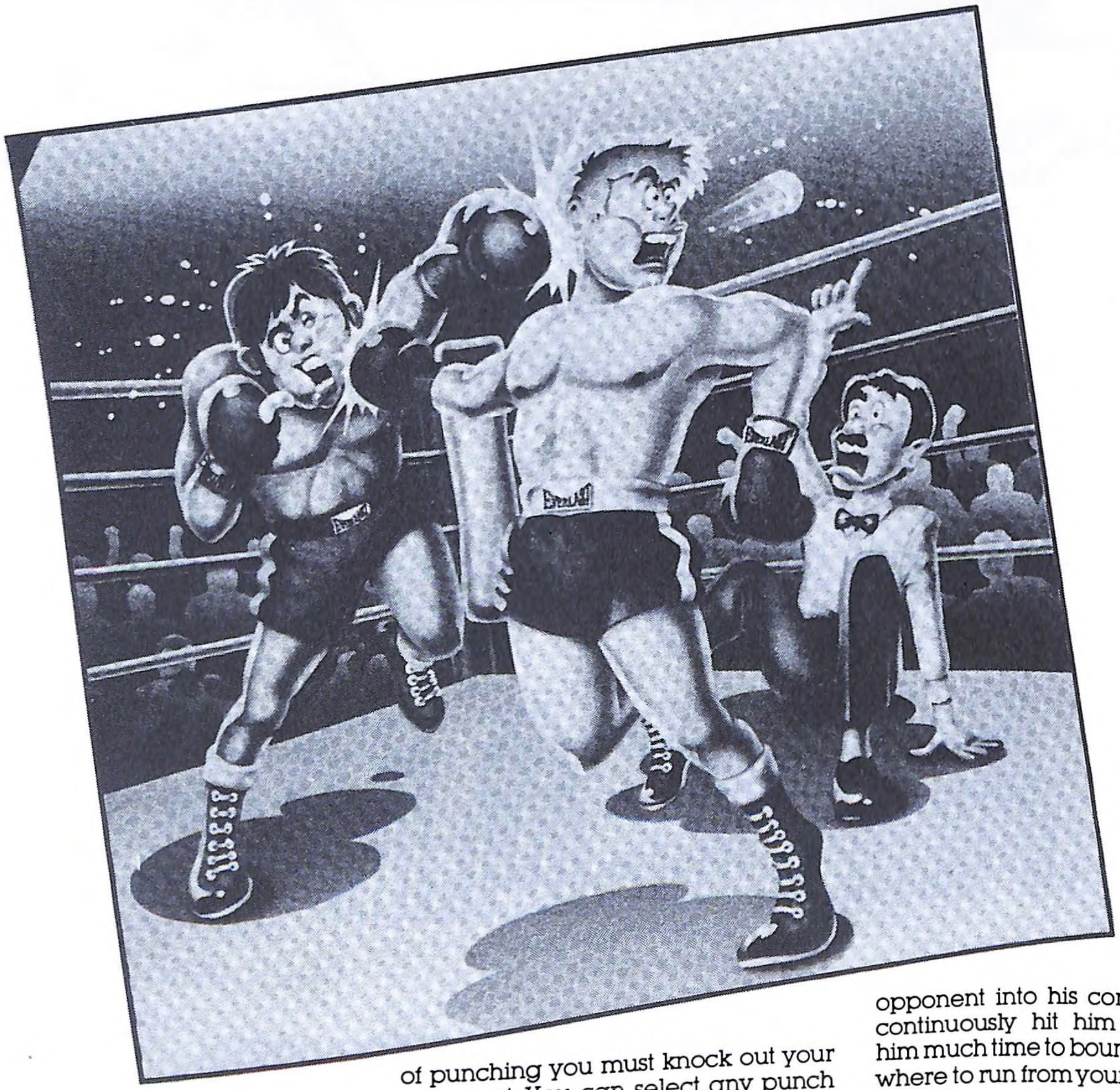
PC-Ditto can be found in some shops for as little as $195.00 which is real value for what you get. It gives the ST a real edge in the compatibility stakes.

If you have an ST or want to buy one and want IBM PC compatiblity, well your worries are over.

Megacom ARCADE

GAMES REVIEWED

- Champion Boxing
- Star Wars
- Slaine
- Feud
- Ace 2
- The Last Ninja
- Defender of the Crown



Henry (Slugger) McGee goes down for the count as he reviews Champion Boxing in the amazing Sega My Card format*

This game is only available on My Card so you will need a card catcher.

If you purchase Champion Boxing then you will get a very good view of the boxing ring, in fact you will find yourself in the ring. You are the underdog in this fight but you can select between five different levels of difficulties or play against a friend. The graphics in this game are amazingly brilliant and both boxers are wearing boxing gloves and big boots to match their big boxing pants. The two boxers are quite large characters with plenty of detail.

FIGHT:-

When playing the game, you have three styles of punching, firstly you have the jab, then there is an upper (cut) and last of all you have the straight punch. With these three styles of punching you must knock out your opponent. You can select any punch style and hit your opponent high or low by using your up and down arrow keys and home cir key or joystick. Of course like real boxing your opponent can block your punches, to block a punch use the up and down cursor keys and if you move your fist up and down in time with your opponent then you won't lose any of your energy and when you run out of energy, then you bite the canvas floor of the ring (in other words you get knocked out and not to mention you get a very big black eye). After being knocked out, you will be counted out.

At the end of every round (the bell rings at the end of each round) each opponent will receive a score out of ten and if the fight lasts through the nine rounds then the fighter with the highest score wins the game. However, if you knock the opponent out (for the complete count) in the first round then the crowd goes ecstatic and a bird walks around the the ring with a sign displaying K.O.

When fighting try to force your opponent into his corner so you can continuously hit him without giving him much time to bounce back and no where to run from your punches. This is an extrememly good game and it would definitely be a must if you're into boxing.

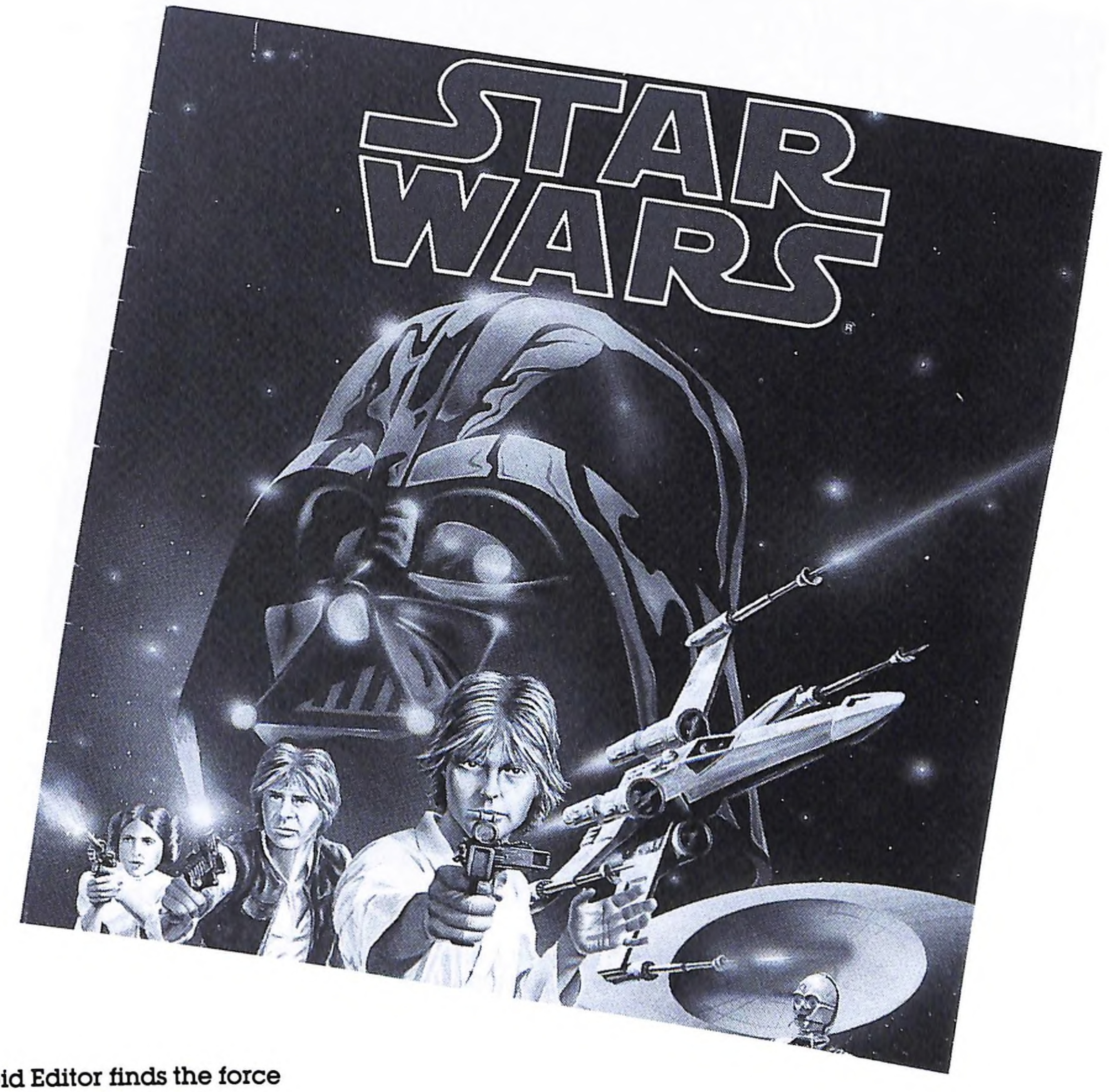
*New stocks of My Cards and the catchers should be available through Computatronics (PO Box 17, Ryde 2112) or the distributors, Compulink, (290 Bay Street, Brighton 3186. Tel: (03) 596 2340). Megacom thanks the Sega User's Group (NSW) for permission to republish this review.

Megacom Scorecard

Champion Boxing

SOUND	8	GRAPHICS	8
COLOUR	8	ACTION	9
PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM?			9

Reviewed on : Sega
Also for : —
Software by : Sega
Distributor : Computatronics
Price : **$39**



Our intrepid Editor finds the force is well and truly with him in this epic.

As a big fan of the Star Wars trilogy, I was interested to see Star Wars the computer game on the shelf of my local Atari dealer.

The game has a great intro with the Star Wars theme and the story of the game comes on the screen, the same way as in the film.

Then you pick which level you want to play at, I chose beginners because of my non-ability at "Shoot 'em down" type games. One thing I like about the game was the choice of whether I wanted to use the mouse, joystick or keyboard (many games don't give you that choice).

Star Wars uses Vector graphics (line graphics) and to good effect. Your job is to shoot whatever comes at you from Tie Fighters (Empire Fighters) and their missiles. When they are destroyed you go to the next level where you go into the Death Star (for those who haven't seen Star Wars, that's where Darth Vader - Bad Guy hangs out). Once in the Death Star your mission is to shoot the laser towers on the surface of the Death Star. These towers have a nasty habit of firing lasers at you, which are a good idea to avoid.

If you make it through the first two levels, then the ultimate test - the Death Star trench. Going into the trench you are attacked by lasers which you can shoot or avoid. At the end of the trench there is the Exhaust Port, if bombed will blow up the Death Star, another victory for the good guys (if you get that far).

Alright it sounds easy, well it's not especially when you get to the higher levels.

The digitised sound is used to great effect in Star Wars, with talk straight from the Star Wars movies.

Star Wars is a classy shoot 'em up and if you like this sort of game then Star Wars is good value.

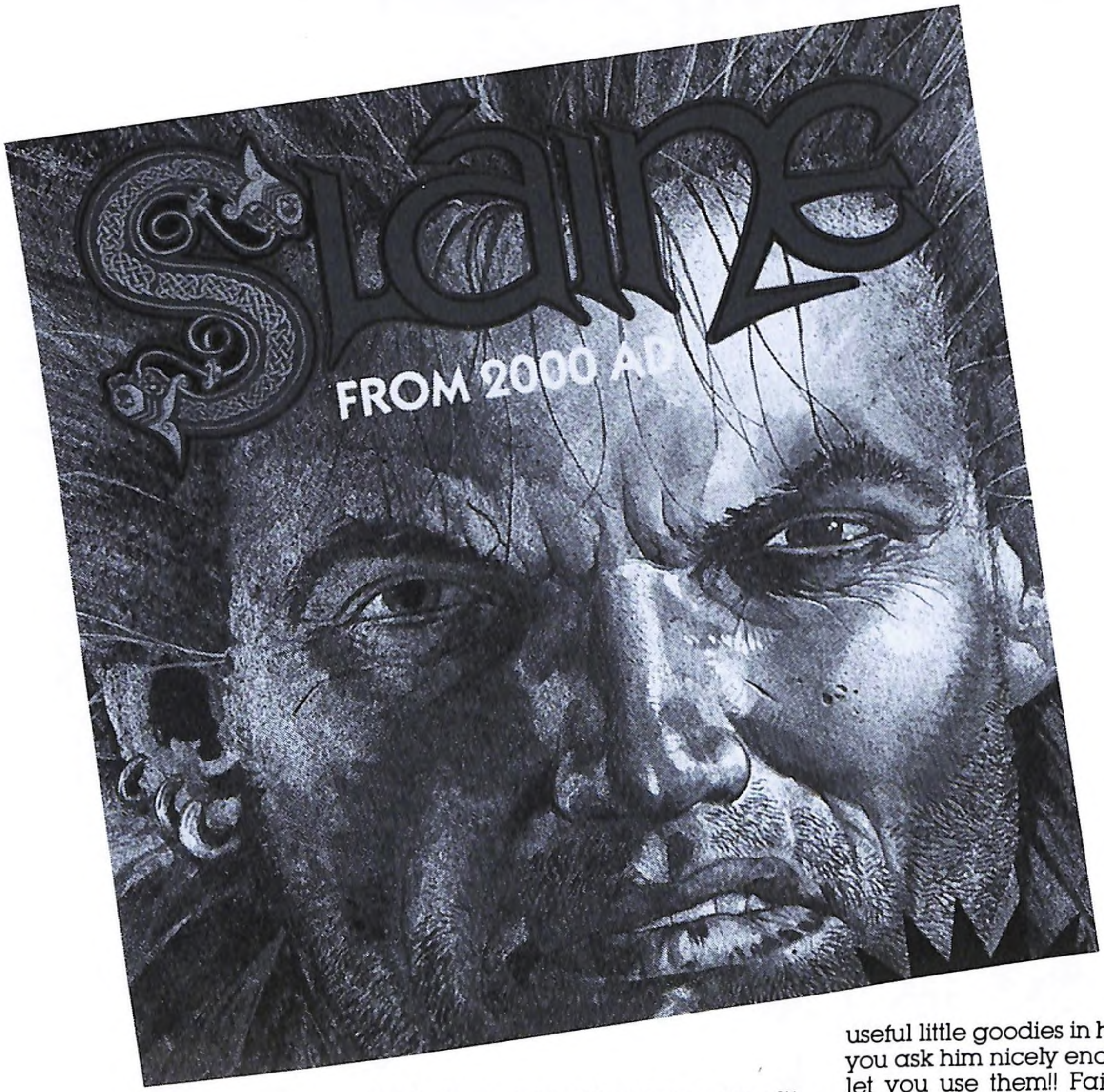
Megacom Scorecard

Star Wars

SOUND	9	GRAPHICS	9
COLOUR	8	ACTION	9
PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM?			8

Reviewed on : Atari ST
Also for : C64
Software by : Domark
Distributor : ECP

Price : **$59**



Aaargh! Hermit turns into Rambo and buddies up with Ukko to combat evil forces.

Looking for a good game to while away those chilly winter days and nights? Something with humour, action and challenge??? Well this game should fit the bill quite nicely!!

If you've got the tape version, like me, then have your crayons and colouring book handy....It takes about 10 minutes to load!! While it's loading you get a good look at Slaine's incredibly ugly face (reminds me of an Editor I know!).

Once the game is loaded you're confronted with one of the best front-end screens that you're likely to see. The use of colour is particularly good and for those of you with green-screens (poor souls), the view is every bit as good.

The main graphic display and responses of the game take place in the bottom half of the screen. On the left, an open scroll gives an overall description of the current location. In the bottom right of the screen, a multitude of various sized pop-up windows appear, giving you small, but detailed pictures of Slaine, the characters around him and the current location. Any relevant action results are also shown in this area of the screen.

The authors of this game have come up with an ingenious concept, which they call REFLEX (c) control.

REFLEX involves choosing the appropriate action from the thoughts that pop into Slaine's mind. These 'thoughts' are actually words that smoothly, glide in and out of two windows in the top half of the screen. The pointer is represented by two hands. I particularly liked the action of these hands as they glide around the mind windows and gently (depending on how hard they hit them!) bounce off the walls.

If you find it a little bit lonely wandering around strange worlds on you own, then you won't have to worry in this game.....Ukko to the rescue!!

Ukko is a dwarf who is your constant companion through thick and thin!! (Well....almost). He carries all sorts of useful little goodies in his pouch and if you ask him nicely enough, he'll even let you use them!! Failing politeness you can always use a little gentle persuasion (a quick backhander!!). He is also useful as a pack-horse.

The game is spread over quite a big area and a few of the locations are very similar, so use your head and use a map!! Lots of interaction with the other characters, lots of places to go and people to see, plenty of things to do and LOTS OF FIGHTING!!...My final advice??....Lock the doors, draw the curtains, put on your favourite adventure music (no sound on this one), and LEAD ON ADVENTURER!!

Megacom Scorecard

Slaine

SOUND	0	**GRAPHICS**	9
COLOUR	8	**ACTION**	9
PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM?			10

Reviewed on : **Amstrad CPC**
Also for : **C64**
Software by : **Martech**
Distributor : **ECP**
Price : **N/A**

Valentino Rossi changes his name to Learic and goes off with the zombies.

Although Amiga users have available to them some of the best software on the market today, it is also among the highest-priced. Not just business software, but also games, which seem to average about $60 to $70. It was a pleasure, therefore, to find a game with a 'budget-priced' tag by Mastertronic, of Britain. The packaging is a transparent plastic case, similar to a compact-disk case.

There are four screen shots on the back of the package, and a brief description of the game setting, as well as the method of game control (joystick, mouse, etc.) and the number of players.

A fairly simple affair, Feud cannot strictly be called 'arcade-style', but does have some arcade features. It is not an adventure game either, but owes something to 'Fairy Tale Adventure' as well as the 'King's Quest' series of graphic adventures, as it uses an above-ground view (but not a plan view) as well as 'three-dimensional' graphics (more on the graphics later).

The premise of the game is this: two brothers (Learic and Leanoric), who both happen to be wizards, have been feuding for many years. The final showdown has arrived, and you, playing the part of Learic, must put an end to your brother before he does the same to you.

This is achieved by roaming the countryside and seeking out Leanoric, then casting various spells at him (such as Fireball and Lightning) until he is destroyed. In order to use your spells, you must first consult your spell book which will tell you the two ingredients needed to concoct it. These two ingredients must then be found, brought back to your home, and mixed in your cauldron, (your foe must do likewise). Each of the ingredients (flowers, herbs, bones, etc.) is always located in the same place. There are twelve spells in all, some which cause damage, others which heal, teleport and freeze.

There is a compass always onscreen which shows the direction of your foe relative to your own position, as well as your spell book and two men depicting Learic and Leanoric. As each character is damaged, his corresponding picture sinks lower into the ground, and when he is completely buried, the game is over.

FEUD
AMIGA
MASTERTRONIC

There are other characters; villagers and travellers wander about aimlessly and may even be employed to aid you by turning them into zombies. According to the documentation, there is a third main character, a witch called Hieke, which may also appear and cast spells on both of you, but I have as yet to see her.

The area in which the game takes place is fairly large, and depicted in excellent, realistic graphics; as good as any of its type that I have seen. Grass, trees, rivers, bridges, huts and statues are some of the features of the terrain, all minutely detailed. Only a small portion of the entire area is displayed at a time (in the top two-thirds of the screen) and your character is moved around this part of the screen. When an edge of the screen is reached, the display suddenly changes to the next section rather than scrolling as you move.

The animation is sufficient, but not a high point in the game. Sound is almost non-existent, which also detracts from the overall appeal of the game.

The terrain, and everything in it, remains exactly the same for each game, which makes Feud fairly monotonous after just a few plays. This is unfortunate, because Feud is, at least visually, top 10 material. It seems that the combination of visual appeal and playability is a difficult one to achieve.

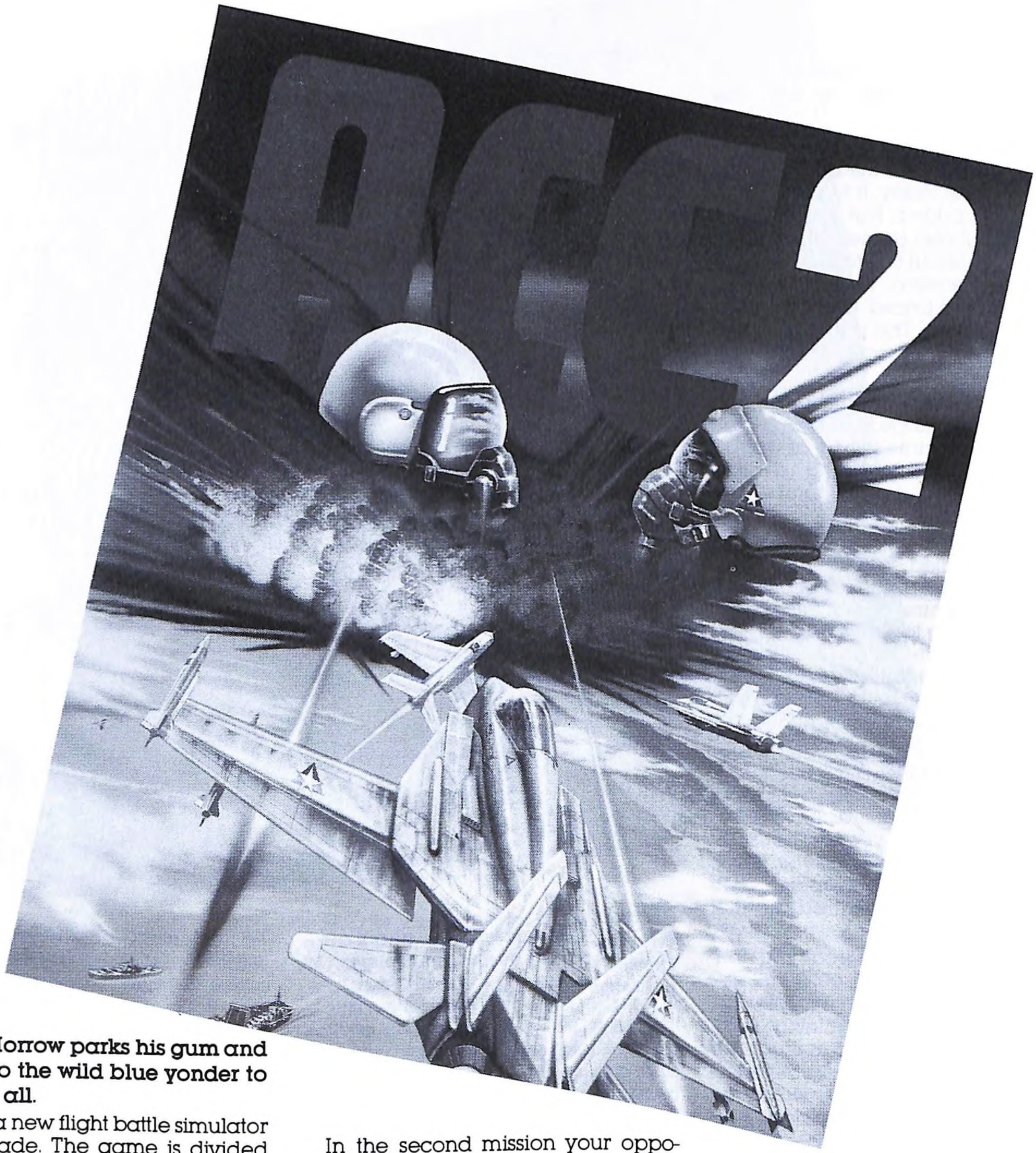
For its price of around $39.95, Feud is reasonably good value, though not highly recommended.

Megacom Scorecard

Feud

SOUND	6	GRAPHICS	9
COLOUR	8	ACTION	4
PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM?			5

Reviewed on : Amiga
Also for : —
Software by : Mastertronic
Distributor : ISD
Price : **$39.95**



David Morrow parks his gum and jets off into the wild blue yonder to defend us all.

Ace 2 is a new flight battle simulator from Cascade. The game is divided into two parts or missions. The first part is a close range dogfight and the second is a full scale aerial and ground attack.

In the first mission you and your enemy are placed at random, but close, positons on a map and your object is to seek out and destroy one another. The plane you control is a Mach 2 combat aircraft which has three types of weapons available to it, these being a cannon, heat seeking missiles and radar guided missiles. You and your opponent, computer or otherwise, fly around blowing each other out of the sky until one runs out of planes, proclaiming the other the winner.

In the second mission your opponent's country has placed a spyship close to your country's coast where it is supposed to monitor a radar station. Your country sends you out to destroy the ship and any other enemy craft, so in defence the enemy have sent out an aircraft to intercept and destroy you. Each plane has an aerial cannon and can be armed by the player, with long or short range air to air missiles and air to ground missiles.

As well as flying around dodging enemy fire you also have to keep an eye on things like your height, otherwise your engines will cut out, and other real time hassles that a plane would go through.

Ace 2 has some good graphics and music. The game itself is fairly good in its own right but is no match for old time favourites, such as Ace of Aces.

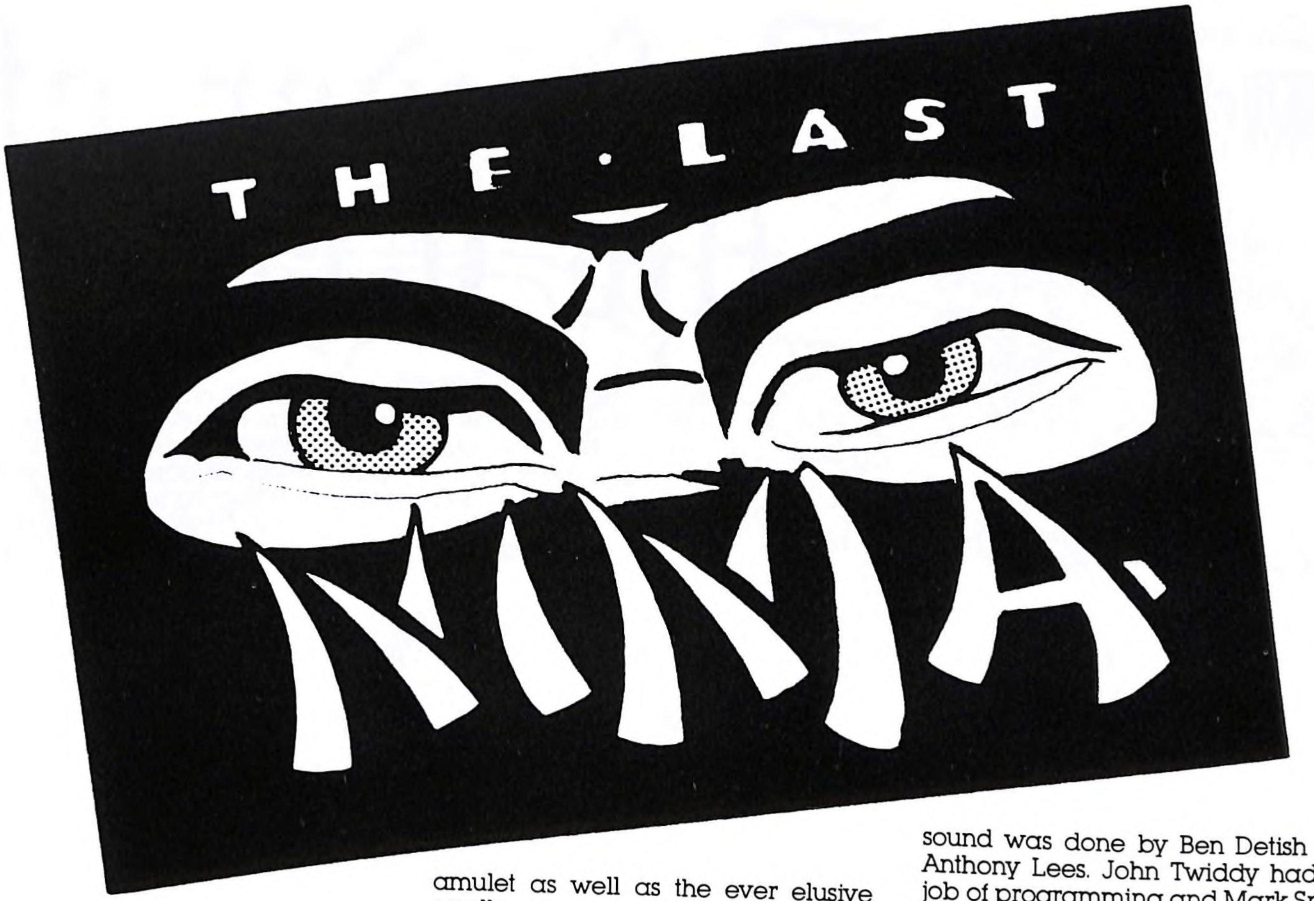
Megacom Scorecard

Ace 2

SOUND	8	GRAPHICS	7
COLOUR	7	ACTION	7
PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM?			8

Reviewed on : C64
Also for : Amstrad CPC
Software by : Cascade
Distributor : ISD

Price : **N/A**



David Morrow knots a pigtail or three in this gripping saga of oriental punch-ups

Can this be the new look of games to come? Well if they all turn out the same graphics, sound and animation of The Last Ninja, I sure hope so! It's been eighteen months in the making and it's sure worth the wait.

You take on the part of a skilled Japanese sword fighter named Akumani and is set around the 900-1175AD Hein period. Your man is trying to retrieve the scrolls of the Ninja Way taken by a powerful Shogun who retires back to an island in the Yellow Sea called Lin Fen. Along your way through the various levels you will meet formidable adversaries who are armed as well as you, except you have to find your weapon first, they are armed with armoury such as staffs, numchakas and swords. Whilst searching through the levels you can drop in on a religious statue or a fountain of knowledge to find out what you need to find next. In the levels you need to search everything including bodies, rocks, shrubs and trees to find needed items including a pouch, a rope, an apple (which gives you an extra life) flowers, a key and an amulet as well as the ever elusive scrolls.

The six levels are: **1. The Wilderness** - here you will find many of the objects needed to complete the game, such as weapons. **2. The Wasteland** - here there are more objects, and after all that searching you must conquer the Lin Fen mountain ranges which is no easy task. **3. The Palace Gardens** - here there are many hazardous traps to keep you constantly aware of what's happening. There are also a lot of ferocious guards out to kill you. **4. The Dungeons** - here, among the trouble of fighting skeletons, you have to try to find your way out of the twisted maze of dungeons. **5. The Palace (lower levels)** - you've made it past the dungeons, now all you have to do is try to get into the palace! **6. The Palace (the inner sanctum)** - you finally get into the last stage of your quest! In this place you can explore the Shogun's private rooms and enjoy the excellent graphics produced by the fantastic System 3 team. As with all of the levels the surprise at the end of each level is hard, but by far the hardest is this one where you fight the Shogun himself!

The game was designed by John Twiddy, Tim Best and Mark Cale. The background graphics and sprites were created by Hugh Riley. The sound was done by Ben Detish and Anthony Lees. John Twiddy had the job of programming and Mark Snowball did the data entry.

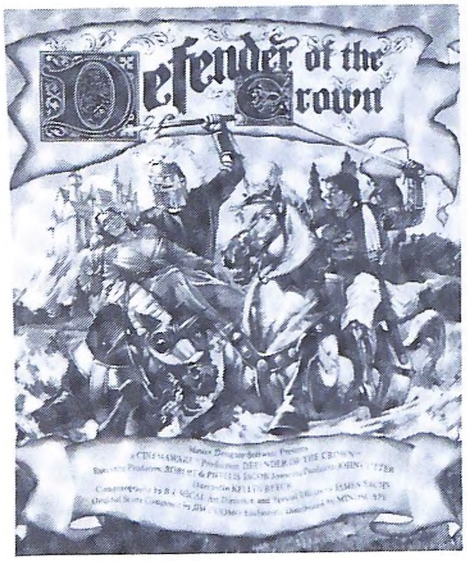
Finally I'd like to say that the graphics, sound and the game in general would have to be one of the best I've ever played. It gives new life to the traditional beat 'em ups! You can't miss this one, but be prepared for a hard job ahead of you!

Megacom Scorecard

The Last Ninja

SOUND	9	GRAPHICS	10
COLOUR	9	ACTION	9
PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM?			9

Reviewed on : C64
Also for : **Amstrad; Atari ST**
Software by : **System 3**
Distributor : **Imagineering**
Price : **N/A**



Defender of the Crown

Valentino Rossi comes on strong with a blockbuster about the original blockbuster.

Put simply, Defender is in a class of its own. However, if it must have a label, it would be that of a graphics-oriented strategy game, with arcade sequences for good measure. The people at Cinemaware would have us believe that Defender is the closest thing to having a motion picture on computer, to the extent of having titles and credits before the game begins. Although it is somewhat of an exaggeration, I must say that they've come closer than anyone else.

The game is set in England, in the mystical times of knights and fair damsels, of heroic deeds and ruthless villains. The object is to gain complete control of the entire country by means of battles, sieges, raids and even jousting tournaments, while your computer-controlled opponents (Saxone and Normans alike) do likewise.

The package contains two disks, called "Reel" 1 and 2. This makes for a bit of disk-swapping for owners of one-drive systems, so two-drive come highly recommended for maximum enjoyment. Upon start-up, a medieval tune plays while the credits and a prologue are displayed, and before long we are prompted to choose one of four Saxon characters, whose attributes (leadership, jousting ability and sword skill) will be yours during the course of the game. The gameplay consists of turns, and at the start of each we are shown a picture of England, with the location of each player represented by a castle. After this comes the main screen ,displaying a map of England divided into various territories, showing the castles and a horse which represents the location of your campaign army. Each territory has a value in regards to the amount of taxes received and the amount of vassals available for recruiting into your army.

At this point you are given several choices: you may choose to hold a jousting tournament, attempt a takeover of an adjacent enemy territory, raid an enemy castle or read the map. When holding a tournament (which costs several gold pieces) it is possible to joust for fame or for one of your opponent's territories. Winning land in this fashion avoids the risks of taking if forcefully, and so being a good jouster can be a real asset. The 'paintings' dislayed during the event are no less than exquisite, from the bird's-eye view of the tournament area to the crowd jostling and horses fidgeting. The actual joust is displayed more or less as it would appear if you were sitting in the saddle, lance at the ready. In a brilliant real-time sequence, complete with excellent sound effects, the mouse must be used to steady the lance and aim it at the shield of your opponent. This is probably the most difficult task in the entire game, and after many attempts I am far from being competent at it. If you are successful at dismounting your foe, you must joust against another knight, and again until you are unsuccessful, at which point the tournament ends.

The second option allows you to attack a neighbouring territory. If it is already owned by you, then it is considered to be merely a movement of soldiers. If it is unowned, it is automatically overtaken by your army and is considered to be yours. The same rule applies if it is an enemy territory, but free of enemy soldiers. Upon encountering an opposing army, a brief battle ensues, from which you may retreat at any time. If the territory were to contain an enemy castle, however, you are given an opportunity to make our assault slightly easier by knocking down a section of the castle wall with a catapult (assuming we own one). A normal battle then follows, and if you are successful you will take control over all the territories owned by that player. If a tough battle is anticipated, you may employ the aid of our good comrade Robin of Lockley, which will substantially improve our chances of winning the battle. Robin's help will be granted but three times, so be frugal in choosing this.

Another interesting bit of the game occurs randomly, when a Saxon lady is kidnapped by ruthless foes. We have the option of rescuing her or ignoring her, but there is really only one choice in my mind.

If you are thinking I am exaggerating the quality of the graphics in this game, I suggest you ask for a demonstration from your dealer. The artist, Jim Sachs, is already renowned for his amazing work in this field on the Amiga, and has outdone himself with his artwork in this game. The documentation provided is clear and concise, and quite satisfactory in demonstrating how the game works, as well as providing helpful hints on some of the finer points.

Megacom Scorecard

Defender of the Crown

SOUND	9	**GRAPHICS**	10
COLOUR	10	**ACTION**	8
PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM?			7.5

Reviewed on : **Amiga**
Also for : **Atari ST**
Software by : **Cinemaware**
Distributor : **Imagineering**

Price : **$89**

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AMST

Jeff Cullinan finds this low-profile versatile Brit. quite a surprise package.

Now here is one computer I am pleased with. The Amstrad CPC 6128 when purchased came as a complete package which consisted of the CTM644 colour monitor, the keyboard, and built-in 3 inch disk drive. Here is a system which doesn't require further additions when all you want to do is get the computer home and get the system running. Of course, as is usual, you will want to start adding to it after a while. Well worth its value considering what can be done with it, and the total cost.

MEMORY

Memory availability of the CPC 6128 is 128k, however, initially on cold start only 64k is available unless certain programs are called to access the other 64k. Several operating systems come with the CPC 6128 and apart from the on board Basic (which is very good), comes with CPM Plus, CPM 2.2 and Dr. Logo.

PROGRAMS

There are hundreds of programs to choose from for the CPC 6128. Some programs are exclusively for the CPC 6128 utilising the full 128k ram capacity, however, many programmers are designing programs which are fully compatible with other Amstrad models such as the CPC 664 and CPC 464. This enables users of all models to purchase the same games and utilities and appears to be a safe practice for gameware firms.

There are many data base type programs available for the discerning user, and also many word processor type programs some of which utilise the full ram capacity of the 6128. These include random access files via the CPM mode.

SPECIFICATIONS

LSI CHIPS
Z80A - Processor running at 4MHz.
128k - Bytes of RAM arranged in two 64k banks (over 41k available to user in BASIC, 61k available TPA to CP/M PLUS).
48k - Bytes of ROM containing BASIC, the operating system and disk extensions.
6845 - CRT controller device.
AY-3-8912 - Sound generator chip 3 voices, 8 octaves.
8255 - Paraller I/O device.
7653 - Floppy disk controller.
KEYBOARD - 74 keys-qwerty style, numeric cluster, cursor and copy cursor, return, enter, shift, caps lock, tab, escape, delete, clear, control.
CASSETTE - Write speed software selectable-1k baud or 2k baud, read speed automatically established by software. Motor on/off controlled by software.
ADD ON ABILITY - Additional floppy disk drive system, drive B if required, centronics compatible printer, joystick(s), various peripherals including up to 252k additional 16 ROMS.
POWER SUPPLY - 240V AC 50Hz (keyboard and disk drive power supplied by screen system).
COST - Prices vary. Around $1100 subject to offered deals.

VERSATILITY

The 6128 is very versatile and is currently being used by myself to do such things as Satellite tracking for Amateur Radio, databasing of other radio stations contacted throughout the years and morsecode tutorials. As well, I know of other people using the system for Radio teletype and Packet radio type operations. I use my system mainly for the popular Bulletin Board System of communications via the telephone, including Telecom's Viatel. To use these systems, an RS 232 serial interface can be added to the Amstrad and is easily obtainable from the appropriate support firms. Other additional items can be added if required eg: the addition of a 5¼ inch disk drive can be extremely cost saving in view of the cost of 3 inch disks which have been at times up to $9.95. This gives one the Drive A and Drive B options and either way in standard Amstrad Data format will give 178k storage space for files on either side of the disks. There are utility programs around which will give more storage capacity on disks and these are available from support firms who advertise in the many Amstrad User Magazines available to the user. Other additions can be the many types of modems available to enable telephone and radio communications.

(Radio Communications for the appropriately licenced users via the Dept. of Communications).

STEREO SOUND

The 6128 has an excellent sound system and output from the computer in

RAD

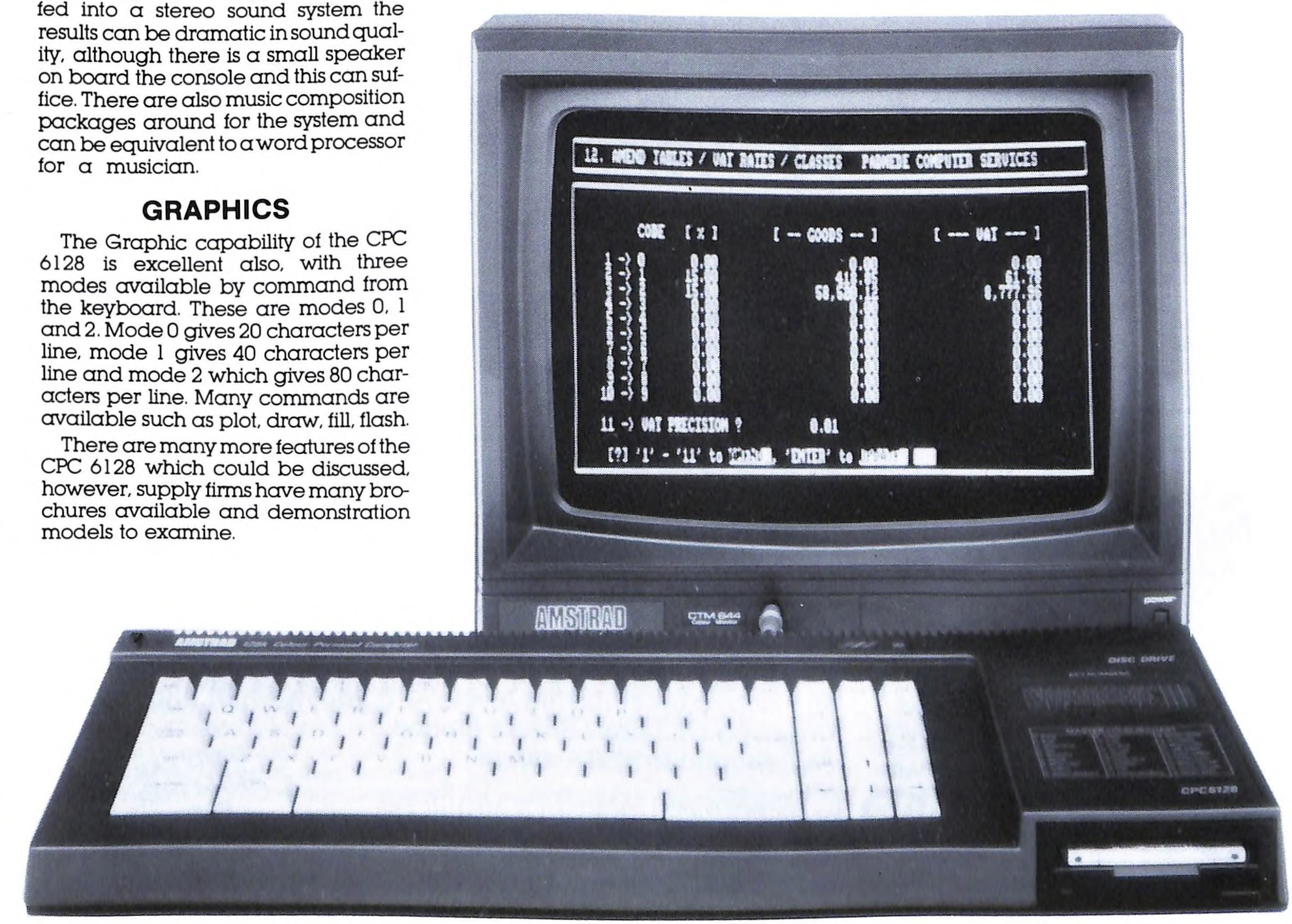
CPC 6128

stereo, so you would appreciate that if fed into a stereo sound system the results can be dramatic in sound quality, although there is a small speaker on board the console and this can suffice. There are also music composition packages around for the system and can be equivalent to a word processor for a musician.

GRAPHICS

The Graphic capability of the CPC 6128 is excellent also, with three modes available by command from the keyboard. These are modes 0, 1 and 2. Mode 0 gives 20 characters per line, mode 1 gives 40 characters per line and mode 2 which gives 80 characters per line. Many commands are available such as plot, draw, fill, flash.

There are many more features of the CPC 6128 which could be discussed, however, supply firms have many brochures available and demonstration models to examine.



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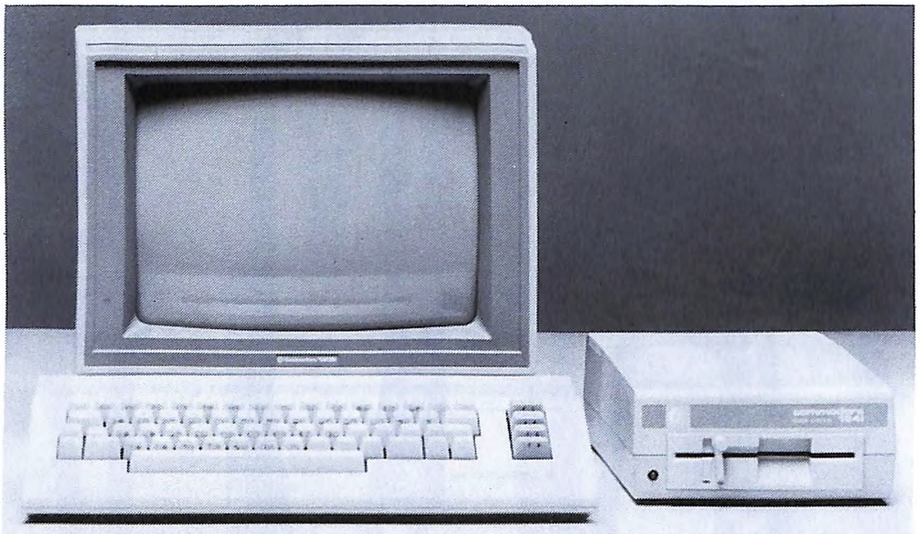
DISC DRIVE
CPC6128



COMMODORE CONNECTION

I first stumbled upon Commodore Connection a few months ago and found it a very useful part of Viatel.

Commodore Connection has been around since October 1986 and was started by the Bay Commodore User Group.

It is the place on Viatel where most Commodore computer users are catered for whether you use a Commodore 64, 128 or Amiga.

Commodore Connection runs a news and magazine section (sponsored by Megacom). It keeps Commodore users up-to-date with new products, price changes as soon as the news happens. The magazine section has articles of interest to Commodore and other users.

A new feature of Commodore Connection is the software TOP 10 for the Commodore 64 and the Amiga, which keeps you up-to-date with top selling software.

If you want to find out more about games to buy, take a look at the game reviews on Commodore Connection which are updated regularly. As well as games, business and utility software, there are also hardware reviews on Commodore computers, modems, printers and so on.

There are classified ads if you want to buy or sell software or hardware. There is also a shopping arcade which is the spot to look for offers from computer dealers and there is also a Buy of The Week feature.

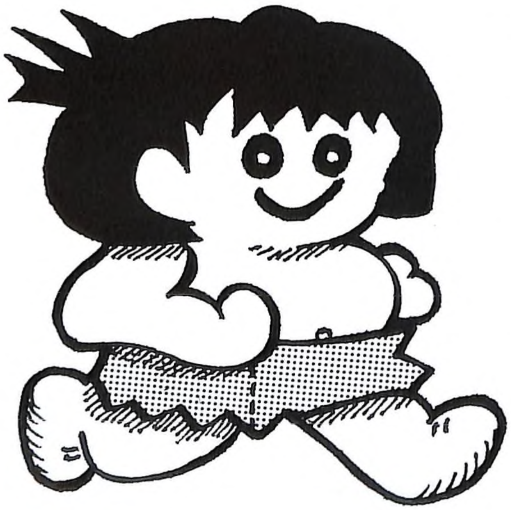
Commodore Connection has an information section which includes user groups, service centres and price lists for Commodore products. There are even programming hints and a Commodore quiz.

The first part of Commodore Connection I used were the Bulletin Boards. There is a Commodore Connection C64 board and the Amiga board.

At the moment Commodore Connection is working on telesoftware, which is something to look forward to. (SEE VIATEL STORY IN THIS EDITION).

Commodore Connection can be found on Page 6420 of Viatel and is a must for Commodore Users.

P.J.L.



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LINKWORD

Charles Tanaka puts Compulink's ingenious word-processor-in-a-cartridge through its paces for all you loyal Sega users.

This new wordprocessor for the Sega is, so far the best yet, however, its main drawback is that to this date it is only available on cartridge but I have been informed that there is a model with battery backup memory.

Unfortunately, I have been given a Linkword cartridge without manual but I have spent hours of experimenting (all or which I enjoyed of course) with Linkword.

When your turn your Sega on with Linkword plugged in, you will see the title screen for a few brief seconds and then it gets straight into the program without all of the parameter settings like the old Segaword 3 had. In fact you can start typing straight away. In the top section of the screen is a menu with the letters inversed. This menu is accessed by holding the function key and the letter in front of the command. The menu is as follows:-

File: (name of document in memory)
Bytes Free 28661
P Page E Edit C Cursor
O Options T Tabs F File

One of the first things I liked was the 28661 bytes free giving almost three times as much memory for writing a document when compared to Segaword 3.

SETTING UP

If you select "Page" then a sub-menu appears with the following commands:-

(S) for line spacing which you can vary from 1 to 3 linefeeds between text when printed out.

(T) so you can set a margin for the top of your document between 6 and 63.

(J) this command will allow you to give your documents the professional look by justifying the lines. When printed out the right hand side of your document will be even instead of the old jagged style. (default N (off))

(A) automatic line feed can be turned off in case your printer automatically does a linefeed.

(P) will allow you to decide how many lines you would like per page, allowing you to select between 5 to 80 lines per page. (default 66)

(R) is so you can set your right margin so you can make your document any width between 12 to 80. (default 70)

(B) this will allow you to set a bottom margin anywhere between 0 to 47.

(N) with this setting on, the printer will automatically number the pages of your document.

HANDY OPTIONS

the next sub-menu is "Options" and here is a briefing of each command in this sub-menu:-

(B) this great feature will allow you to print headings etc. in a bold print.

(U) another great command to help you make certain areas of your document stand out, this will underline the selected text.

(C) this command allows you to centre a heading etc ...

(N) so you can manually set a new page.

EASY EDITING

The next sub-menu is "Edit":-

Within the edit menu you can select text by using the commands (B) for block beginning and (E) for block end. Selected text will be displayed on the screen as inversed letters i.e. black letters on white squares rather than white letters on a black background. Once you have selected text you can use other commands in this sub-menu such as (C) for copying or (M) to move or (D) to delete your selected text and do a new command. (H) for hiding text. Also from this sub-menu you can use (L) to delete a line or (S) to search and replace a word or string of words.

The Cursor sub-menu is basically moving your cursor or viewing area within your document. (U) + (D) are to move up and down screens within your document and (A) + (Z) to let you jump to the top or to the bottom of the screen respectively and (S) + (E) will take you to the start or end of your document respectively.

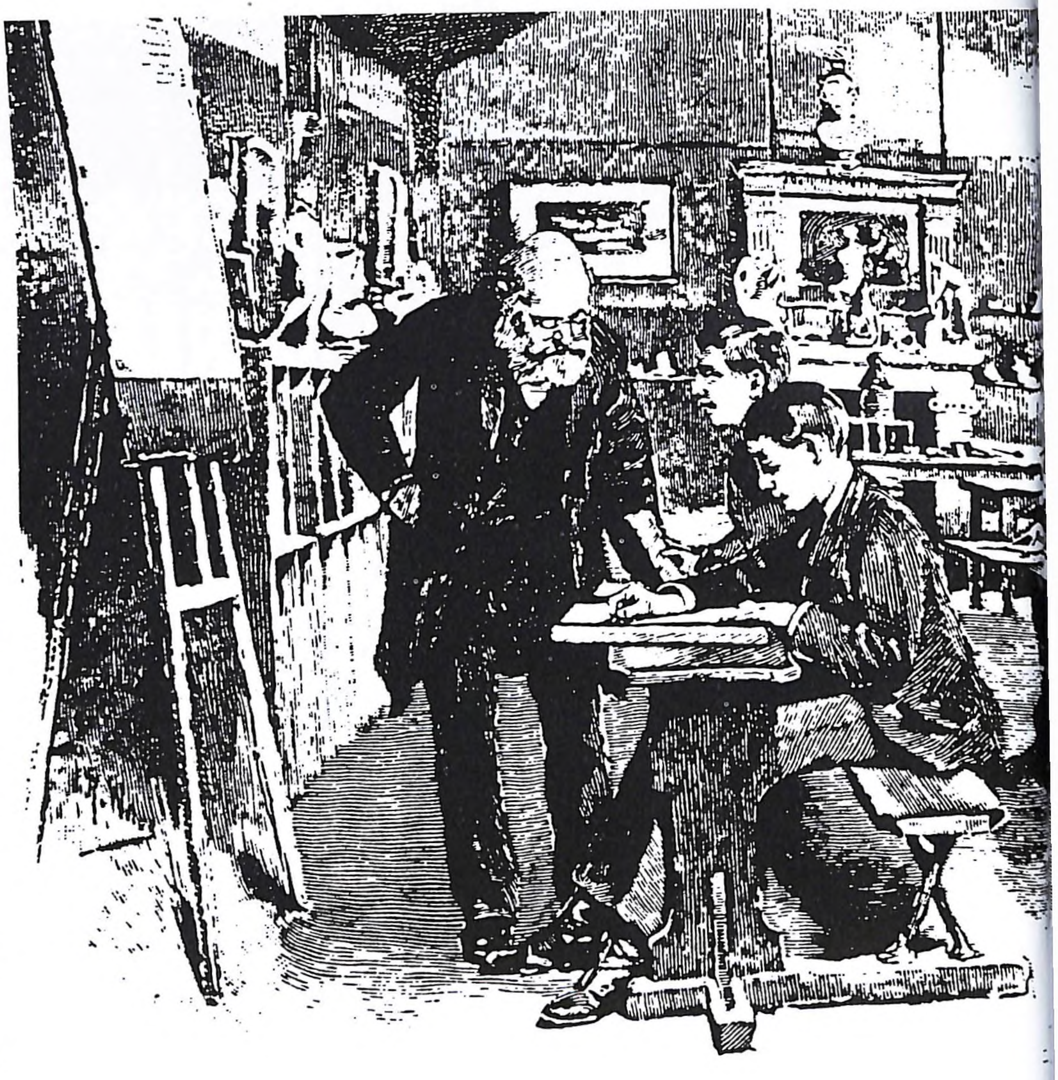
The last sub-menu is "File":-

(S) + (L) + (V) these commands will let you save, load and verify a document respectively and once your document has been given a name it will be displayed on the main menu/typing screen. (E) you use this command if you wish to erase your current document from the computer's memory and (F) is for format so you can see what your document will look like on paper before you print it. Last and most important is the print command to see how good your writing skills really are (not to mention the spelling errors).

BEST YET

So if word processing is important to you then there really is no question about what word processor to use. This is the best yet and of course Linkword has been programmed in machine code, so you are assured of a fast and easy to use word processor.

This word processor is an Australian product by Compulink in Melbourne.



Computers

Roland Yeung* lays it on the line for asking questions and getting the

The purpose of this story is to explain what computers can do for you in education, without all the high powered jargon that seems to be everywhere.

You walk into a computer shop and what happens? You say, "I want to buy a computer to help me in my work and home. What do you suggest? The answer invariably comes back "What do you want to do?" This throws the onus back onto you the customer. Without wanting to sound ignorant, you usually mumble something vague about a program you heard mentioned about over a coffee break. At an opportune time you make a hasty exit. We are told often that computers can do anything, but that sort of unhelpful approach from sales staff does nothing to whittle down the mysticism and fear which newcomers find in computers.

The computer world has turned a corner. In early days, computer literature was like hobby magazines. They were written by enthusiasts who were right in the middle of doing it - writing programs and building computers. The articles were quite specific and were full of jargon, programming language that everyday people like me had little hope of deciphering or finding useful.

Then it all happened. All sorts of incredible technical advances were made. The politicians saw the potential and injected money and motivation into the industry. The marketing experts got involved. Schools were given grants to set up computers. The computer magazine publishers faced a boom. Magazines not only continued to serve the hobbyists and the programmers but also those interested with the latest technologies, the latest features, the latest software, the best value for money.

The trouble with all this was the emphasis on little things, the things that made the next step in technology. The next advance, the next new frontier. For many of us, it was like shopping for a motor car, being shown a Ferrari and a Lamborghini and being told the pros and cons of each, when we just wanted to buy a commuter motor car that had to be parked in the inner city streets at night. Computer sales seems to be all about selling expensive things. Expensive computer programs costing more than $500, expensive computers costing more than $1500, expensive monitors costing more than $250.

There are so many computer magazines now available. Many are from overseas. More and more are being written in Australia. Daily newspapers now have a regular section on computers. These are all very interesting, but are full of technical information, or emphasise that computers is all about programming or system analysis. They only confuse the readers who want to get interested in computers and add a myticism which gets in the way of potential computer users.

WHAT BRAND?

Now having said all that, the use of computers in education is not simple and straight forward. Many schools with Government help, have more than one computer and a good portion of families represented in the school have access to a computer of some sort. With so many different types and brands of computers around, the attitude of having one brand of computer to do everything is not practical,

at School

students and teachers who've been usual gobbledegook answers

nor good value for money, whether for home or school. The attitude of having only one brand of computer in a school is also not a valid point of disagreement in computer purchase policy. The hardware is relatively cheap enough for school communities to have different brands - namely Apple and IBM (and their compatibles), and to have different types of computers, depending on the purpose of the job.

So how is the brand important to you? If you do not have a computer at home yet, then the brand of computer at your work will be one consideration of the type you could buy for your home.

USES OF A COMPUTER FOR SCHOOL

Here are some specific school uses for a computer by a student or a teacher. If you organise many excursions, or you keep an inventory of equipment that constantly needs updating and is accessed by several people, then a DATABASE would be useful. If you regularly write budgets and need to itemise many monetary transactions, then a SPREADSHEET is useful. If you write form letters, give out many worksheets, draft many letters and memos, then a WORD PROCESSOR is very useful. SIMULATIONS are specific packages that asks the user to respond to "what if ?" situations. Many of these are subject based. ART, GRAPHICS & MUSIC are areas which some computers handle extremely well. They can enhance many class activities and presentations. There are many specific tasks that a computer can perform, but they will be covered in other articles.

COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER OWNERS?

The only data access from the school that a teacher could find useful would be the DATABASE of student records to make up class lists or excursions. Such information that would be handy to have would be the student's form, and elective subject group so that lists could be made easily for class teachers to know of coming absences from their class due to the excursion. Databases will allow lists to be made quickly where the students could be grouped into boys and girls. Unless the teacher needs to work on this information at home, then there is no need to have a compatible computer at home with compatible data. Usually the quantity of information and the regularity or usage does not fully justify buying the same brand computer. That is you do not need the same brand and model computer as the school or a computer that will run the same programs even though it is a different brand or model.

A PRINTER?

If you do not have a printer, and decide not to outlay the $500 for a NLQ printer, then it may be very useful to have a computer compatible with the school one, so you can run your programs and do your print outs at school. On the other hand, if you only use a printer occasionally but for extended hours, then borrow the school one!! It's much cheaper than buying and running one. However, the overall cost of the package with or without a printer, with or without other features, with or without compatibility with school computers, are some of the factors you need to consider.

If you use many different software packages in computer assisted instruction, then you will need to try out each one yourself, before the students use the programs. Borrow the school's computer that will run that software, don't buy the computer especially. If your school does not have enough to borrow, then it is unlikely that there will be sufficient numbers of computers for the whole of the class'to use. Wait for the school to improve the availability and access to computers before you get involved.

Now if you can't borrow a computer for the weekend because there is not enough in the school, it may be too premature to consider using computers as part of teaching, as there will be few other people who will accept the computer, and there would only be a few computers to use. Assistance within the school is essential to any computer user. Your school community needs to consider making computers more accessible to teachers and students.

Once you have used and borrowed computers for a year or two, then you may consider buying one for your home. By that time, you will have a better feel for the differences in quality of keyboards, the different types of software, the different colour screens, the different features and the different price levels for hard and software. Most importantly, you will not have to pay for features you do not need.

WHERE TO PUT THAT COMPUTER?

To encourage new users, the computer must be placed in a high traffic room. There needs to be many people coming and going near the computer. The benefit is that many people can look over the user's shoulder to find out for what they are using the computer. Other people can then appreciate how a computer can be useful. Often there are people deep in conversation around computers placed in such busy areas.

Now, if new users get to use the computer and there is a problem, then it may so happen that someone who knows about computers may pass by and offer a solution. Often it's a simple answer - one keystroke - something really embarrassingly easy. This saves new users from being unnecessarily frustrated over something they are not yet familiar with. It is said that a computer is a stupid tool, a machine that has to be told what to do. It is very frustrating to the new user if they can't find the right way to tell the computer what to do.

In the home, a high traffic area would be in the family room. Have the computer set up with sufficient table space for books as well as the computer. Instruction manuals should be in easy reach along with scrap paper for rough notes. A pinup notice board would be good for posting a list of those important keystrokes and codes that one keeps on forgetting. A power board with switches placed alongside the computer makes it easier to turn it off and on. This is preferable to reaching down to the floor and groping for switches.

WHO CAN HELP?

New users should seek out the "computer people" in the school. Often they are very friendly and willing to help. They may make special times available, say after staff meetings, or at lunchtimes to help new users become familiar with the computer or the programs.

The more experienced computer users can help new computer people by asking for assistance in say inputting data into the computer. The experienced person can set up the computer and program, and then hand over to their helper. Such tasks would help new users become familiar with the keyboard, keys used for editing on screen, inputting information and saving data. Such tasks could be typing play scripts, typing in class lists, typing assignments and essays, and so on.

The development of the computer has been tremendous. The computer reaches everyone everywhere in their work and life. It is a very useful tool. It may not necessarily save time, but can improve communication between people. Because of its ability to retrieve information, the computer can keep other people better informed and in more detail than was formerly practical. Every experienced computer user has to create more opportunities for new users to use the computer. It seems that very little help is readily available in the commercial area, especially for the individual not belonging to a large company already committed to technology.

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*Roland Yeung, B.MusEd., M.A., is music teacher at Blackburn High School (Victoria) and Conductor, The Grainger Wind Symphony Inc.

VIATEL HONOUR ROLL

Probably the most popular bulletin boards on Viatel are those operated by Microtex 666 - Chatline, Black Board and Blue Board.

Who uses 'em? Well, here's a sampling of the characters you're likely to come across....

ARMAP •ALLAN •ALIEN •ACID TRIP •ANON •ABHORABLE JACK •ANTISPIN •BLICK •BRETT •BABS •BOMBSHELL •BOOTS •BLACK WIZARD •BOGWEED •BON •BELINDA •CASEY •CHOOK •CAZ •CHRIS •DIGBY •DV8 •DBEST1 •DBEST2 •DBEST3 •DON •DIMITY •DOC •DDJ •DARV •ENDER •EN PASSANT •FLO •FOX •FLOSSIE •FLINX •FALCON •FRAZZ •FRUITBAT •FIZBAN •GOING NOW •GUNNA •GDP •GREMLIN •GODFREY •GROVER •GARTH •HERMIT •HYRUM •ICEMAN •JAWS •JACKAL •KY •KIWI •KARL •KOENIG •KIPPERS •KAL •LIN •LE DRAGON •LE TOAD •LASER •LORD K •LEISA •LEO •LUKE •MEGAMAN •MANTICORE •MUTILATOR •MARTY •MIKE •MALLET •MONSTER MAN •MICK •MOON •MARIKA •MAD •MATERIAL GIRL •MONTY •MO •MOGGI •NODONN BATTLEMASTER •NECROMANCER •NERMAL •POLLY •PAT •PANTHER •PUMPY •PINK PUSSY •PAN•QUOKKA •QUARK •RAMJET •REBEL •RUBBERLOBBY •RICK •RAMMER •RJC •ROB •SORCERER •SWAN •SOLITAIRE •SARGON •SUSHI SISTERS •SHADOW •SHERM •SLICK •SON OF BARD •SIDSYNC •SPARKLE •STARIA •SARK •SID •SCOOP •TFF •TEX •TRANSIT •TAS •TD'S •TMK •TRK •THE VOICE •TFF •VECTRA •VAGABOND LADY •WHITE RABBIT •WIZ •WANDERER •WATCHER •WHITEWING •WONDER BOY •WARLORD •ZERK •ZYRA •ZEL

- **Jerry Blick**

ZLOTNIK 44

Tadeus Brinski uncovers a sensational development behind the iron curtain.

If rumours reaching MEGACOM are correct, it seems that the Russians are getting set to enter the Home Computer market.

The information we have is that they are about to launch a remarkable new machine called the Zlotnik 44.

This was developed by a team working at Petrovosk University under the direction of the well-known physicist, Dr. Andrei Zlotnik - one of the USSR's leading lights in missile guidance systems.

The Russians are pretty tight-lipped about technical details, but a friend who has just returned from Europe tells us that the Zlotnik is based on a new 32-bit chip which will make Apple Mac, Amiga and the Atari ST's look like pussy cats.

Apart from its ergonomically designed keyboard and built-in software (word processor, database, spreadsheet etc. - shades of the late lamented Commodore Plus 4!) the 44 is said to have the world's first non-static zeon memory chip, giving it a capacity in excess of 4.4 megabytes!

A multi-port mini-cartridge system is used in place of disk drive, each 1 megabyte cartridge being zeon-based. Up to 4 cartridges can be used at once.

The Zlotnik can be used with any TV or monitor and has its own built-in Fax/Dot Matrix printer as well as a modem.

The breakthrough which has made the incorporation of so many features possible has been the development of what the Russkies call "mini-integration circuitry".

As far as we can work out, what this means is that they have been able to achieve a level of miniaturisation unheard of in the computer laboratories of the west. The entire computer is said to be no bigger than a briefcase - including built-in power supply.

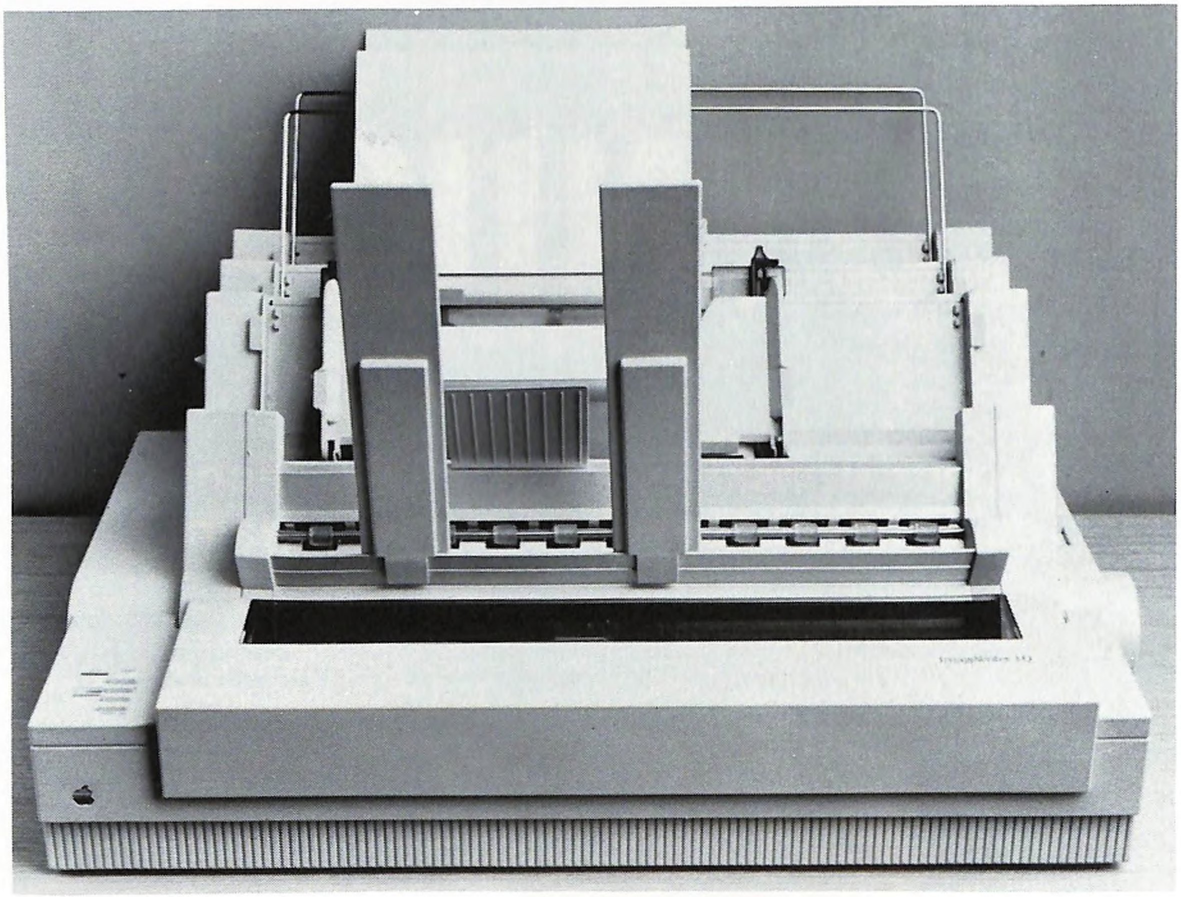
At the present, the Zlotnik is aimed solely at the Russian market, where it will sell for the equivalent of $A285.

However, work is proceeding on a non-Cyrillic keyboard and ROM, and modifications to the system to cut power consumption down to a more acceptable 35amps have almost been completed.

Due to some early problems with overheating which caused deformation of the acrylic casing, production 44's will be equipped with a unique automatic carbon dioxide flame retardant system.

Although the zeon chip and cartridge have proved susceptible to ultra-violet degradation, a special light-fast hood will be provided with every machine. It is said to be quite comfortable to work under for periods as long as 30 minutes.

If any MEGACOM readers have more information about the Zlotnik 44, we would be glad to receive it.



Apple bites into printer market

After using Apple II's and Macintosh's I was quite familiar with the Apple Imagewriter, the intelligent dot matrix printer from Apple. The Imagewriter has always been a good workhorse. However, for many applications it is limited. Well, with the release of the Apple Laserwriter it made many new applications possible eg. desktop publishing, but the Laserwriter is not cheap, so Apple have released a new printer to its stable, the Imagewriter L.Q. The L.Q. has greater capability than the Imagewriter and is less expensive than the Laserwriter.

So what does the L.Q. have to offer? The L.Q. can be used in most Apple computers i.e. Apple IIe, IIc, IIgs and the Macintosh series.

The L.Q. Printer is a high quality dot matrix printer. It comes with a 27 pin print-head which gives a 216 x 216 dots per inch printing capability, the quality from this sort of printer looked good to me. The L.Q. prints text and graphics well for a dot matrix printer. Though you cannot expect it to have the same performance as a Laserprinter, the L.Q. is not that far behind.

If you have a few Apples, then you can use the L.Q. in an Appletalk network. The L.Q. can use a colour ribbon and has a colour option mode, so you can use four colours for both text and graphics.

Spreadsheets and large forms which would normally be too wide for the Imagewriter can be handled on the L.Q. with a 15 inch wide carriage. The L.Q. has a tractor mode and bottom feed which makes it possible to use pin feed as well as plain paper. Multipart forms can be fed from directly beneath the printer.

It seems that the L.Q. was designed with low level desktop publishing in mind with the L.Q.'s large selection of fonts, it can handle most of the common fonts such as Times, Symbol, Helvetica. This makes the L.Q. very useful for newsletters. Most application software does not have to be updated to use the L.Q. so you do not have to change your current software.

If you own an Apple Computer and you find the Imagewriter a bit limited and the Laserwriter too expensive, then the Imagewriter L.Q. gives you an attractive option.

P.J.L.

Publishing isn't all it's cracked up to be, I can tell you. When they offered me this job here, I quit the treatment plant the same day and now I'm not too sure I did the right thing.

I mean, it sounded like a real step up in life: my own air conditioned office, free coffee, use of the company car and the chance to get started in the industry of the future as an EDP assistant.

Nobody told me that EDP meant computers. I thought it was Extra Dole Payments and I figured I might as well get in on something THAT good. You wouldn't spell your ferret with this mob of whackos.

The office turned out to be the pokey hole under the stairs which I share with 2 brooms, a pedal bin, an ancient bottle of Pine-o-Kleen, and a rodent which gnawed my sandwiches to crumbs for the first two days until I woke up and kept them in my back pocket.

Free coffee is a sore point. The head sharang says that once we've saved up enough tokens we can send away for a full jar.

If you ever saw the company car you'd understand why they offered free use of it. Even if you had a real death wish you wouldn't take that rotten old Skoda further than the wreckers.

And now they expect me to learn computers. (What the hell is a ZX80?). Last week they gave me a desk, which was very considerate of them. It still had the Vinnie's sticker on it. This week I have to see if I can find a fourth leg for it. If I get real lucky, they'll spring for a chair before the next issue comes out.

Isn't life frustrating? By the time you get to where you can make ends meet, some stinker has moved the ends. G'bye now...

Blick

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User Groups

MELBOURNE ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS (ST AND XL/XE)

Melbourne Atari Computer Enthusiasts (M.A.C.E.) is an independent computer user group catering for all Atari computer users (XL/XE, ST and Mega systems). It meets on the second Sunday of each month (excluding January) in the Rotunda Building, Monash University from 10.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Its activities span practical as well as demonstration sessions plus a number of Special Interest Groups for both the 8 bit and 16 bit computers. M.A.C.E. also publishes a professional standard magazine each month to keep its members informed of relevant information about their hobby gleaned from local sources as well as Australia and worldwide. The establishment of their own bulletin board system using an Atari 1040ST and 20meg hard drive has also proved popular with members, local, interstate and overseas.

Apart from the club meetings where general information is swapped and new ideas, programs and hardware modifications are discussed in a theoretical way the club offers the scope for smaller groups to form along their own particular interest areas. These groups meet at their own convenience and have involved such things as screen art, adventuring, various computer languages, education groups, midi music, technical support, hardware modifications, development groups, to name just a few. Any type of interest is catered for, and the idea behind all this is not just to learn more about Atari computers, but to have fun while doing so.

Members also have access to large public domain libraries regardless of their hardware setup. The Librarians for both types of computer setup are hardworking people who continually turn up good quality public domain and freeware programs from all parts of the world. The effective use of a club library does not only prove educational but also very cost effective. Although M.A.C.E. does at times act as an agent for special software deals providing members with discounted prices the full emphasis has always been on promoting public domain and freeware programs through its own library at minimum cost.

The current fees are $25 p.a. plus a $5 joining fee ($30). To find out more about M.A.C.E. go along to one of their meetings or write to M.A.C.E., P.O. Box 340, Rosanna, Victoria 3084.

AUSTRALIAN AMIGA USER ASSOCIATION

The Australian Amiga User Association (AAUA) was formed in 1986 by Commodore Amiga users to cater for the interests of owners of the new Amiga range of computers.

The aims of the Association are the interchange of knowledge on Hardware, Software, Education, Business and all related applications, so as to promote full and further development and use of the Amiga range of computer systems.

The Association has extensive connections with both Commodore and overseas Amiga user groups. This allows the dissemination to members the latest information relating to Hardware, Software or any other Amiga relevant subject.

Open days are held periodically by the Association consisting of discussions on News, Demonstrations/Reviews of the latest in Hardware and Software, as well as talks and lectures on programming or many other Amiga related subjects, all held in the atmosphere of a social function for members and their families.

Association members are posted bimonthly Newsletters which contain the latest in Association news, articles, reviews and other topical information relating to the Amiga, gathered from the Associations abovementioned sources.

A 24-hour multi mode (V21,22,23) Bulletin Board Service is operated by the Association on (047) 58 8006 which is accessible to subscribing members with limited access to visitors. This BBS features full facilities for private and public messages, Association news and the exchange of Public Domain Software.

For further information or details on membership etc. please write to: AUSTRALIAN AMIGA USER ASSOCIATION, P.O. Box 389, Penrith, N.S.W. 2750 or contact the President or Secretary on: (047) 39 6182, or on (047) 51 4143. Alternatively the Association can be contacted via Viatel message (page 473534880).

AUSTLINK COMPUTER CLUB

The AUSTLINK microcomputer club was founded in 1984 by Roger Stockburger, with the club then catering solely for the MSX range of computers.

We now also cater for CP/M and MS-DOS based computers (yes, this included the IBM clones). We offer normal club services for the above machines, as well as a library of public domain software for MSX, CP/M and MS-DOS. Furthermore, we import MSX software and provide programming services and hard-disk management for the IBM PC/XT/AT computers.

Some of our services provided are MSX software imports, conversion of CP/M software to run on the SVI 738 X-Press MSX computer. We also offer a programming service for the IBM PC/XT/AT and clones, being mainly COBOL and BASIC work. Microcomputer consulting is also another of our services available through the club (i.e. which computer best suits an individual or small business's applications).

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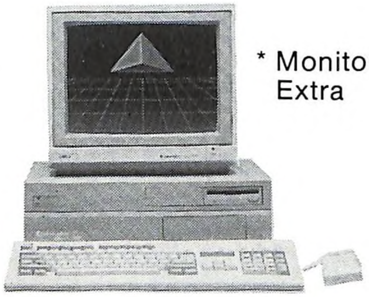

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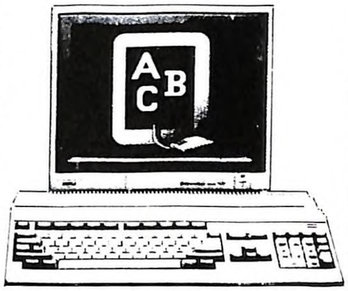

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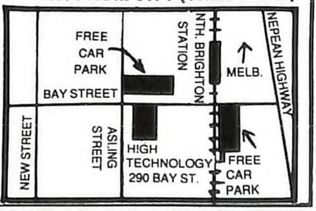
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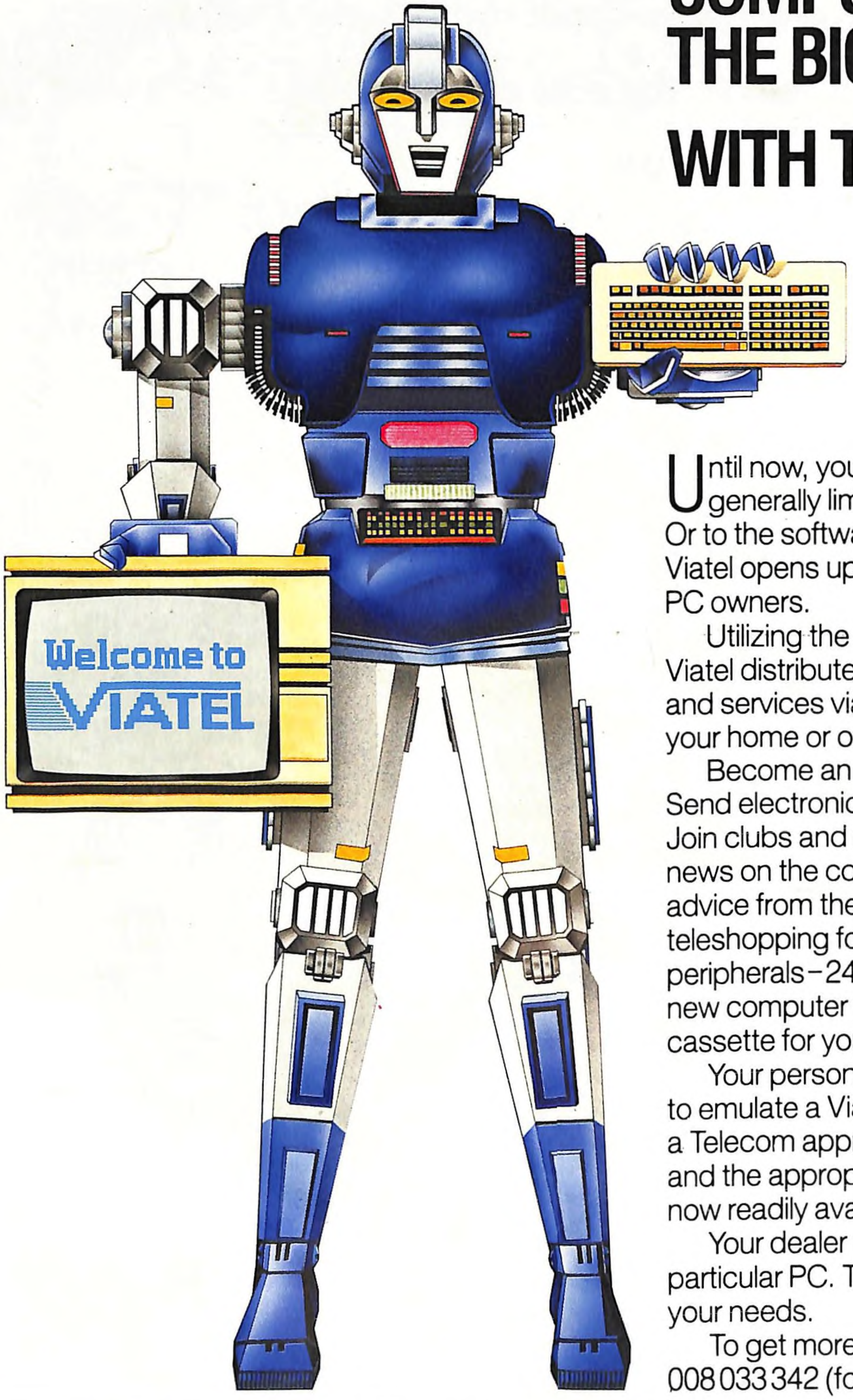

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